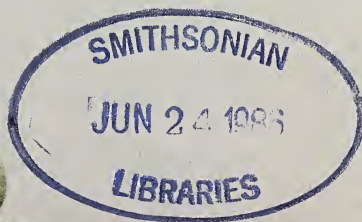


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African Violet

MAGAZINE

Volume 28 Number 3 June, 1975



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Every attempt is made to keep articles technically correct. Since the growing of fine African violets can be achieved in many ways, the method and opinions expressed by writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of AVSA.

PERTAINING TO VIOLETS

6. Insects and Diseases of African Violets—Herbert C. Fordham
7. Attention AV Growers! Here's New Disease
29. Testing Lights for African Violets—George A. Elbert
25. Watch Your Plants
34. Adventures With Gesneriads—Ruth M. Webster
35. A Family Project—Mrs. Ralph J. Duckworth
32. International Garden Tour—Mrs. Frank Tinari
33. Fertilizing
35. Planting by the Moon—Em Hunt
36. From There to Here With All My Plants—Sandra Leary
40. Watering Violets
41. Growing Culture in New England—Mrs. Mary V. Boose
41. Violet Culture and Its Meaning—Mrs. Joan Steckowych
42. Aims to Grow Fewer and Better Plants—Mrs. Jessie Crisafulli
43. Light
46. Vacation Care—Mrs. J. A. W. (Ann) Richardson
47. Humidity
50. Perseveres and Wins Gold Rosette — Mrs. Albert (Gertrude) Blouw
51. Soil Mix
64. Plant Lover Does Like Violets Best—Mrs. Evelyn Aceituno
71. Lazy Susans for African Violets

COLUMNISTS

4. Message From the President's Corner—Edith V. Peterson
5. Beginner's Column—Mrs. J. A. W. (Ann) Richardson
9. Registration Report—Adele Tretter
10. Cross Your I . . . s and Dot Your T . . . s—Mrs. W. F. Anderson
13. Honor Roll of African Violets—Mrs. M. G. (Madeline) Gonzales
18. Musings from the "Mini-Mam"—Mrs. Sidney (Ellie) Bogen
22. Your Library—Mrs. M. E. Garner
39. Calling All Affiliates—Helen Freie

40. Boyce Edens Research Fund—Mrs. Paul O. Gillespie, Sr.
AVSA Booster Fund—Mrs. Dorothy Gray
44. Question Box—Anne Tinari
48. A Foote on the Violet Path—Grace Foote

MISCELLANEOUS

10. Poesis in Your Design?—Raymond Dooley
32. Adventures With Gesneriads—Ruth M. Webster
43. In Memoriam
46. Special Certificates Earned by Judges
47. The Continental Approach—Joseph Hudnak
68. Columneas—Mrs. Warren F. Cressy, Jr.
71. Planting by the Moon—Em Hunt

SOCIETY BUSINESS

3. Strictly Business—Your Business
18. Awards Needed for 1976 Atlanta Convention
31. Judges and Exhibitors Newsletter
43. Questions for Lifetime Judges
54. AVSA Officers, Directors, Standing Committees, Special Committees, Staff and Atlanta Convention Committee
58. Life Members
61. Honorary Life Members
61. Past President.
61. AVSA Life Membership—Edith Peterson
62. AVSA Library: Regulations for use of Library Material
62. Slide Programs Available and Other Material Available

CONVENTION

65. AVSA Show Ablaze With Colorful Prize Winning Violets
66. Recognition Given Magazine Articles
67. Adele Tretter Awarded Honorary Life Membership
New Introductions Shown at Boston AVSA Convention
Millie Blair Receives Award
10 AVSA Members Get Recognition
70. Kolbs Awarded Bronze Medal
Four Yearbooks Receive Awards
List Chairmen of Conventions
71. Silver Bowls Go to Winners
Prizes Taken Home by AVSA Members
Planning to Enter Yearbook?

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Julie Adams of Shelton, Conn., was the originator of this novel and most unusual container — a hollowed out horse chestnut — holding a miniature African violet. This was one of the entries in the Nutmeg State Show. (Photo by Frank Burton)

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ADVERTISERS' INDEX

15. Amber's Violets—And Other Things
19. Annalee Violetry—Special for Fall 1975
8. Arndt's—600 Varieties of Violets
14. Louise Barnaby—African Violet Starter Plants
12. Becker Printing Co.—African Violet Note Paper
16. Mrs. J. S. Berry—African Violets and Supplies
15. Bert's Lazy Susans
5. Mary V. Boose—Heavenly Violets
22. Buell's Greenhouses—Gesneriad Specialist—500 Varieties of Violets
15. David Buttram—Newest from Rev. Charles Blades
8. Ruth Carey's 1975 Revised Handbook for Judges and Exhibitors
16. Castle Violets—Leaves and Plants
8. Violets by Constantinov—New for 1975
5. Crestwood Violetry—Rooted Cuttings, Leaves
23. Dode's Gardens—African Violet Kits
12. Doris Drennen—African Violets
- INSIDE BACK COVER—Fischer Greenhouses
51. Floralite Company—Lumen-Liter Plant Stands
5. The Flower Pot—Mini's, Semi's and Standards
28. Homer H. Gabert—African Violet Reference Manual
19. Granger Gardens—African Violets
14. The Greenhouse—Greenhouse Gro-Cart
5. Bernard Greeson—Aids to Growing—Micro-Mike
12. Bernard Greeson—Nemagon 50
28. Happy Violets—Labeled Plants
22. Sim T. Holmes—The Parson's Series
14. Hyponex Plant Food—African Violet Soluble Food
11. Indoor Gardening Supplies—Lights and Plant Stands
28. Albert G. Krieger—Starter Plants
8. Louise's Greenhouse—African Violets
- INSIDE FRONT COVER—Lyndon Lyon—Where the Violets Are
12. Mary-Ray Violets—Rooted Cuttings Only
15. Mary's African Violets—Growing Supplies
9. Ronn Nadeau—Hybrid AV Seeds
- INSIDE FRONT COVER—Park Nurseries—New Varieties Are Terrific
26. Plant Marvel Laboratories—Feed as You Water
12. Rose Knoll Gardens—Newest Varieties
25. Ruby's—Plantbator, the Hydroponic Indoor Greenhouse
15. San Francisco Plant Co.—Color Catalog of African Violets
15. Shirley's Bloomin' Blossoms—AV Leaves
16. Schmellings African Violets—One-Stop Service
23. Schultz Instant Liquid Plant Food
25. Shoplite Company—Decorative Plant Stands
8. Stand-Bye—With With Confidence
28. Stim-U-Plant Lab—Home Gardening Aids
- BACK COVER—Tinari's Greenhouses
7. Tomara African Violets—Over 200 Varieties
14. Tubecraft Watering Aid
23. Tubecraft FloraCart—Portable Indoor Garden
11. Vegetable Factory Greenhouses — Custom Designed Greenhouses
27. Verilux—Fluorescent Lights
72. George Vincent—African Violets
16. The Violet House—Plastic Water Reservoir
28. The Violet Nook—Leaves of Prize-Winning Varieties
5. The Violet Window—Fresh Cut Leaves
33. Vitaloam—Re-jewva-tone
23. Mrs. Leonard Volkhart—African Violets and Episcias
25. Volkmann Bros. Greenhouses—Reservoir Wick Pots
5. The Walkers—AV Supplies, Insecticides, Plastic Pots
26. Doug Wiser—Perfect Watering Device
8. Mrs. Ernie Wurster—Violet Leaves

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BY LAWS: See September, 1973 issue

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HONOR ROLL: See June issue

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MINUTES: See September issue.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT: See Jan. issue.

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TALLY TIME: See March issue.

TEACHERS: See September issue for list.

TREASURER'S AND AUDITOR'S REPORT: See Sept. issue.

Message From The President's Corner



Dear AVSA Friends:

Greetings! When I last wrote to you, I mentioned that, as of October 1974, we had 14,944 AVSA members, and I now want to report that, as of the end of January 1975, there were 16,329 members. Isn't that wonderful! It is great to see AVSA grow but it is even better to realize that there are so many people enjoying growing African violets. Isn't it exciting to be a member of such a large family of African violet enthusiasts?

We want AVSA and its African Violet Magazine to be just the greatest! Your officers and directors are here to serve you. If you have suggestions, we will welcome them. That doesn't mean that all suggestions will be adopted, but it does mean that they will all be given consideration.

Participation in any society gives one a feeling of really belonging, and we invite your participation in sending articles of general interest for our magazine. There must be many, many of our members who have good ideas they are willing to share; interesting experiences that will prove helpful to others; culture hints. Why not write such an article and send it to our Publications Chairman, Mrs. W. F. Anderson, 360 Tulip Drive, St. Louis, MO 63119? She will check to be sure that similar material has not already been received from another source, and may do some editing, and then send it on to our Editor, Grace Foote. What fun to see an article with your own byline in our African Violet Magazine!

In my March letter, mention was made that I would like to give an award to the local society selling the most NEW AVSA memberships during its 1975 show, with further details to be in this letter. My original thought was "local" societies, thinking that it would not be fair to include councils or state and regional societies. But on second thought, and realizing that in our Northern California Council contest for the best AVSA Promotional Table at a local show, some of the smaller societies have been able to sell more memberships than the larger societies, have decided to make it an award to the affiliate society or council selling the most NEW AVSA memberships during its 1975 show. Information to be sent to me (Edith V. Peterson, 1545 Green Street, San Francisco, CA 94123). The letter should be signed by the President of the society and giving the following information:

Name of society sponsoring the show.

Date and place of the show.

Number of NEW AVSA memberships sold at that show.

Name and address of the person sending the information.

The award will be presented at the Atlanta Convention.

Best wishes to you all for a very happy summer.

Sincerely,

Edith

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Let the multiple crown plant dry out somewhat and knock it out of the pot. Squeeze the soil ball so that it falls off the roots. Then have a good look at the plant and decide how you can take it apart with some roots on each plant. There will be some plants that will just fall apart roots and all. Some will need help. Take a long slim sharp knife and insert it at the top of a spot where two plants are joined. Cut down between the plants right through the root system dividing the roots between the two plants as much as possible. Do the same with other parts if possible. Groom what you have left and plant. If you have any tops that have no roots or if you have loose leaves, put them in peat moss or perlite and keep them damp until they take root and send up plantlets. The probabilities are that after the plant has been divided you will need to use smaller pots. Remember the rule that the pot should be one-third the size of the diameter of the plant.

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Insects And Diseases Of African Violets

(ED. NOTE: This material on "Insects and Diseases of African Violets" was prepared by Herbert C. Fordham, Extension Horticulturist, Suburban Experiment Station, University of Massachusetts and presented at AVSA Convention in Boston).

Insect and disease problems of African violets can theoretically be avoided if one takes the proper sanitary precautions. In actual practice, however this does not always work out.

The use of a sterilized soil or artificial soil mix is an absolute must in avoiding the major disease problems. It is equally important to know that newly purchased plants have come from a reliable grower who has the knowledge and experience to recognize problems should they occur and take the proper steps to correct them before passing on diseased or insect infested plants to the unwary customer or friend.

Fortunately, the African violet is not host to a long list of diseases. By understanding the cultural requirements of this favorite houseplant, most diseases can be avoided.

Plants grown in an unsterilized soil that is kept too wet are headed for disaster. Disease organisms such as *Phytophthora* and *pythium* which causes crown rot, *Rhizoctonia* and *Fusarium* which cause root rot, will thrive in wet soils. Symptoms of all of these diseases look alike ie. decay of the roots and crown and wilting of the leaves. Similar injury can be caused by overwatering or over-fertilizing, making diagnosis of the problem difficult without laboratory culturing and microscopic examination.

Treatment of crown or root rot diseases of African violets are not usually practical unless one can be sure of what the disease organism is. Should a positive diagnosis be made, protective measures against the spread of certain of these diseases should be made to avoid spread to other plants.

Gray mold (*Botrytis cinerea*) is a fungus disease which causes a wilting and decay of the leaves. Affected areas usually become coated with a straw-colored downy fuzz. It is more commonly found under conditions of high humidity particularly in the greenhouse or other enclosed structures occasionally used by indoor light gardeners.

Good ventilation is essential in greenhouse production to help lower the humidity. Overhead watering should be avoided since splashing of water from infected plants will quickly contaminate other plants.

Powdery mildew (*Oidium* sp.) is perhaps most easily recognized as a grayish-white dusty appearance on the foliage. In advanced stages it may even

become felt-like. Powdery mildew is a parasitic disease which often causes a dwarfing or stunting of the growth and yellowing of the leaves.

To reduce the possibilities of insect infestations, know the source of your plant material. Play safe and keep new plants isolated for 3 to 4 weeks in case there are unseen enemies on board. Several of the insect pests which may suddenly appear are easily seen and recognized. Mealy bugs and aphids are clearly visible and relatively easy to control. African violets have several pests such as mites and thrips which are microscopic in size and the type of damage they do is the main clue as to their existence.

Mealybug (*Pseudococcus citri*) is most easily recognized by the white, cotton-candylike covering over their bodies, which range up to about 1/4" in length. This is a soft bodied insect which is usually found clustered near the axils of the leaves. The young which are light yellow, actively crawl about but as they start to actively feed, the waxy-white filaments begin to form on their bodies. These are a sucking insect pest and much like aphids, feed by inserting their beak into the plant tissue.

Ground mealybug (*Rhizoecus terrestris*) is a small species covered with a thin white wax however, rather than feeding on the above ground parts of the plant, this one will be found feeding on the roots. For this reason it may escape early detection until infested plants have already become seriously weakened.

Aphids are usually recognized by most plant lovers as being small, soft bodied insects some having wings, but many without. Although they vary in size and color, those usually found on African violets are a small, black species. These are a sucking insect pest which if allowed to go unchecked will cause a gradual weakening of the plant. Aphids are also the carriers of mosaic disease which cannot be controlled once the plant is infested. Keeping plants insect-free will eliminate this problem.

Mites are probably the most serious pest of African violets because they are not usually visible to the naked eye. Two different types may be found, each causing its own characteristic injury. Cyclamen mite infestations will initially cause a grayish or yellowish off-color in the small leaves.

The young leaves in the crown of the plant become stunted, hard and cup upward. Buds and flowers soon become distorted and drop prematurely. Broad mite will cause serious stunting of the plant and leaves will tend to curl downward rather than upward as with cyclamen mite. If you suspect injury from either of these pests, isolate the plants at once.

Root knot nematode is a minute worm-like parasite which usually enters a plant through the root tips where it establishes itself in one region of the root. Once established within the plant the root knot nematode will cause small galls or swellings on the roots and a gradual weakening of the ground parts. Inspection of the root system for small galls is the obvious clue to this problem. If

affected root sections are cut open the minute worm-like parasites can be seen easily under a low power microscope.

It has been obvious at this point that no mention has been made regarding the use of any pesticides for controlling the various insect and disease problems associated with African violet.

Because of differences among states regarding pesticide regulations, it would be advisable to check with your local County Extension Service or Pesticide Board to be sure those pesticides you select are permissible under the present laws.

The hobbyist will find it expensive and impractical to invest in a wide variety of pesticides when an all-purpose houseplant spray may do a fairly good job.

Attention AV Growers! Here's New Disease

It's a RED DISEASE!

A new problem, which also affects Rex and Reiger Begonia and "Piggy-back plant", is troubling African violet growers in Michigan. Can anyone suggest a remedy?

Plants grown under varied cultural conditions with different soil, water, fertilizer; under natural or artificial light; and in different types of pots, have been reported with similar symptoms.

When specimen plants were examined microscopically in the plant laboratory at Michigan State University, no evidence of insects was found. Further tests are being conducted to determine if the trouble is caused by a virus.

Here are the SYMPTOMS:

Many, but not all, plants develop very red back leaves, even plants which did not show red before. New growth has smaller, shorter, very red stems. New leaves develop with almost no stem at all.

Although plants continue to flower, sometimes almost excessively, plant growth stops. Older leaf edges curl under or up and in later stages leaf stems curl down over the edge of the pot and become quite rigid while center leaves grow upward at an odd angle.

The disease does not kill the plant. Eventually there is a slight recovery and the plant starts to grow again but looks stunted compared to a normal plant. The trouble is transmitted to young plants rooted from cuttings from affected plants. The disease is very contagious affecting all plants in a collection within a two month period.

If you have experienced similar symptoms,

please report to AVSA Research Chairman, Frank Tinari, 2325 Valley Road, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006.

PLEASE BE PATIENT

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BEGINNER'S LUCK, 2/16/75
Mrs. R. L. Pritchett, 1206 Castle Hill, Austin,
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RENEWAL

The following registrations have been received during the period from November 30, 1974 through February 28, 1975

CONNIE'S POLKA (2625) L-BW 35 s & sdc S 12/4/74

CONNIE'S SKYLITE (2626) L-BX 589 s & sd S 12/4/74
Constance R. Koch, 4934 W. Ainslie, Chicago, IL 60630

SEVENTY FIVE PINK (2627) PX 39 sf L 12/5/74

Tinari Greenhouses, 2325 Valley Road, Huntingdon Valley, PA 19006

PURPLE TEMPEST (2628) V 27 dc S 1/18/75
James H. Smith, Apt. A-2, Jefferson Road, Cortland, NY 13045

SWEET TRANQUILLITY (2629) WPG-E 359 df S 2/4/75

CONNECTICUT BLUE (2630) B 359 dc S 2/4/75

C & N Mallette, 171 Division Ave., Shelton, CN 06484

RESERVATIONS

The following reservations have been received during the same period as above.

CHERYL'S DELIGHT 1/25/75

Robert S. Blake, 4155 Weskan Lane, Bridgeton, MO 63044

POINT TAKER * BRIGHT EYED DONNA * BLUSHIN DONNA 1/1/75

Carl D. Martin, 5030 N.W. 183 St., Opa Locka, FL 33054

JOY BELLS * CHARISMA * BIT O' CHEER * BETTYE CROWELL * BIG DEAL * REMA 2/6/75

House of Violets, 936-940 Garland St. SW, Camden, AR

JANEY BRISCOE 2/27/75

Mrs. R. T. Davis, 2818 Rio Grande, Austin, TX 78705

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Claudia	x	Blue Regent
Claudia	x	Pixie Trail
Pinks-A-Poppin	x	Agnew
Pinks-A-Poppin	x	Miriam Steele
Pinks-A-Poppin	x	Elfriede
Pinks-A-Poppin	x	Musetta
Pinks-A-Poppin	x	Pixie Trail (mini)
Blue Sprite (mini)	x	Claudia
Blue Sprite (mini)	x	Elfriede
Blue Sprite (mini)	x	Tippy Pink (mini)
Blue Sprite (mini)	x	Allen's Toy (mini)
Blue Sprite (mini)	x	Gigi
Blue Sprite (mini)	x	Miriam Steele
Elfriede	x	Pixie Trail (mini)
Elfriede	x	Violet Trail
Elfriede	x	Miriam Steele
Elfriede	x	Agnew
Elfriede	x	Tiny Dots (mini)
Elfriede	x	Allen's Toy (mini)
Elfriede	x	Blue Regent
Agnew	x	Elfriede
Agnew	x	Dora Baker (mini)
Agnew	x	Blue Regent
Agnew	x	Allen's Toy (mini)
Midget Bonbon (mini)	x	Allen's Toy (mini)
Midget Bonbon (mini)	x	Blue Regent
Miriam Steele	x	Violet Trail
Miriam Steele	x	Dardevil

Select the hybridization which seems to you to hold promise of an interesting new cultivar. Remember that a single hybridization produces seeds which will create plants with various combinations of leaf shape, flower color, size, and form, etc., of each parent. Thus you will get many different new varieties from the seeds of any one hybridization.

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Poesis in Your Design?

*Raymond Dooley
33 Collfield Ave.
Staten Island, NY 10302*

(ED. NOTE: Raymond Dooley's talk was made at a workshop, "Poesis in the Design Division" at the AVSA convention held in Boston, MA)

The theme of my program is "Poesis" in the design division. In this I plan not to talk about techniques or the elements and principles of design but "Poesis". Poesis is "The creative art or creative power". How does one get it? learn it? develop it? What can the individual contribute?

Can you express what people feel or think in a universal way, a more sensitive way, a different way? To help find answers, expose yourself to — and experience — the best that man has thought, said, done and felt; even if it means time, trouble, study or expense. The worlds of art, music, dance, history, literature, philosophy, travel are places to look for the answers for enrichment of life, for inner resources that yield inspiration and stimulation. To learn the skills to express the inner vision, to do it your way is to be creative and then go beyond. Make the most of your talents by expressing that special entity, the individual which is you. Find the inner self, and express it that way.

Several years ago when first asked to do programs on design I picked up the Judges Handbook and other arrangement books to make notes on elements and principles. After I had finished I found myself confused, these things were not what I was really concerned with when I was creating a design. I was concerned with expression, communication, a statement. The arrangement is an art form. It's a living sculpture that expresses important moods, feelings, ideas. It is an improvisation with many different types of materials, plant, plastic, metal, wood, whatever. Dealing with shows there are three important items in a show schedule that relates to your design: 1st — The theme; 2nd — whether it is an artistic planting or an arrangement, 3rd — the space in which you have to work with (the niche). Any other information as well as technique and elements and principles of design are unnecessary for creating. I personally feel the development of creativity is the first important step, for once that is developed you can go in many directions: Learning more about technique and the use or misuse of the elements and principles of design. If technique or elements and principles are developed too soon, they can hinder your creativity because you think in those terms, rather than what does this theme mean to me and how can I make a statement with it. Arranging can be much deeper an expression than just doing some-

thing that looks pretty. Of course, the schedule is the law of the show, but once an idea is born, adjustments can be made to adapt to the schedule.

Now, let me talk about the development of creativity. It comes from the inside. If you have ever really cried or laughed, loved or felt anger, you have felt that emotional center that gives you the ability to create. This center is called your one point from yogo. It is located around your navel. It was your life line before you birth and it is now the center for your emotional feelings. It is where your big energy comes from. You naturally tap into it when you feel fear or when you need that extra bit of energy to complete a difficult job. But on a sensitive level it takes a calm and inner peace to bring it to the surface. You must be in touch with your mind, body, the environment in which you are in, and that of which you are working, as well as an idea of the emotional development in which you want to go. Thru relaxation and concentration this center can be tapped to create and develop that idea.

After your idea on the theme has been formed then the work begins. First, I deal with the color, the hue, the value. The intensity for color can express so much with so little work and it can make or break a design. Starting with the hue, which is the color you have decided is right for that theme, then later working with the value and intensity. The background is very important when working with value and intensity. In many cases it can make your flowers stand out thru different value or shade; and thru intensity or contrast, it can subdue an overpowering accessory or container which you need to express your idea.

Second, is the choice of plant material, it is what you are trying to communicate: the time, the location, shape, spirit. Next are your accessories, base, container. Do they work with your idea? Do they give enough or maybe too much to your design? You must decide as you go along. You may have to look further and make changes.

Last of all the real fun of putting your design together, working with lines, styles, shapes, forms, different material, adding and subtracting.

My one suggestion if possible is to at some time take a course in the Japanese style of arranging for their theories are much like ours but their methods

as well as their concept of trimming is quite unique. The idea is that as your eye travels around the design, there must be places for your eyes to rest and then travel on. They do this with trimming. I also believe in their method of shaping, the trick is to first look for interesting pieces and then shape it, using your two hands.

Soaking and wiring are not necessary and sometimes makes the material look too contrived, particularly for an artistic planting. I also like the use of heavy mechanics so that clay or stickum is not necessary, for all it does is destroy bases and accessories or whatever you put it on.

I also enjoy doing designs that balance off each other using as few mechanics as possible. In miniatures this can be very useful. I do suggest a hot glue gun. It's just great on driftwood and heavy objects so you don't have to wire or go crazy with the stickum.

The one other thing I agree with in the Japanese style is that a design cannot be judged, for tastes differ and vary from judge to judge. Some like Picasso, others prefer DeVinci. No one can change that, their decision is final with the show committee and the public, but as long as you feel you have expressed your feelings about that theme, do your utmost. Their decision should not make any difference to you, sometimes you win and sometimes you lose. It should not matter.



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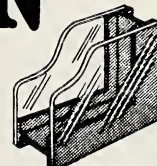
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Shrill (Lyndon Lyon)
Smoke Rings (Vallin)
Ulery's Trifari No. 1234 (Ulery's Greenhouses)

1966

Bloomin' Fool No. 1473 (Richter's Greenhouse)
Blue Chips No. 1340 (Naomi's African Violets)
Fandango No. 1782 (Granger Gardens)
Flash (Lyndon Lyon)
Fleet Dream No. 1131 (Select Violet House)
Glad Rags (Lyndon Lyon)
Granger Garden's Angela No. 1210 (Granger Gardens)
Granger Garden's Blue Modiste No. 1449 (Granger Gardens)
Granger Garden's Fair Elaine No. 1217 (Granger Gardens)
Granger Garden's Snow Ballet No. 1219 (Granger Gardens)
Hi Hopes No. 1303 (Lyndon Lyon)
Oriental Red No. 1304 (Lyndon Lyon)
Richter's Green Dawn No. 1138 (Richter's Greenhouse)
Richter's Red Crown No. 1180 (Richter's Greenhouse)

1967

Delft Imperial No. 1326 (Granger Gardens)
Granger Garden's Fury No. 1216 (Granger Gardens)
Granger Garden's Never Lovelick No. 1213 (Granger Gardens)
Granger Garden's Sweetheart Blue No. 1225 (Granger Gardens)
Granger Garden's Top Sail No. 1212 (Granger Gardens)
Paul Bunyan (Lyndon Lyon)
Sea Grape (West)

1968

Christmas Holly (Reed)
Champion's Water Lily No. 1289 (Champion's African Violets)
Silver Crest No. 1161 (Mrs. Duane L. Champion)
White Perfection No. 1471 (Lyndon Lyon)

1969

Tommie Lou No. 1744 (Oden)
Peak of Pink No. 1467 (Lyon)
Master Blue No. 1465 (Lyon)

Candy Lips No. 1461 (Lyon)
Clipper No. 1724 (Lyon)
Crown of Red No. 1462 (Lyon)
Plum Tip No. 1468 (Lyon)
Leawala (Lyon)
Full Stop (Lyon)

1970

Strawberry Shortcake No. 1509 (Taylor)
Jolly Giant No. 1549 (Lyon)
My Darling (Luciano)
Purple Choice (Lyon)
Red Honey No. 1551 (Lyon)
Cousin Janet No. 1547 (Lyon)
Icy Peach No. 1642 (Lyon)

1971

Lullaby No. 1783 (Granger)
Pink Jester No. 1598 (Granger)
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Hello Dolly No. 1641 (Lyon)
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Magnifica No. 1643 (Lyon)
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1972

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1973

Autumn Russet No. 1777 (Granger Gardens)
Charm Glow No. 1779 (Granger Gardens)
Granger Garden's Pied Piper No. 2021 (Granger Gardens)

1974

Ann Slocumb No. 1907 (Lanigan)
Blizzard (Lyon)
Bullseye (Lyon)
Creekside Moonbeam (Bea Mills)
Dazzling Deceiver No. 1865 (Lyon)
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PINK'S A-POPPIN'
PINK VICEROY
PIXIE BLUE
RED BUMBLEBEE
ROYAL CLUSTER
ROYAL TRINKET
SEA BREEZE
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There's a saying "You can't understand the subject unless you know the language." Is the language used to describe the African violet difficult? Not when everyone understands the terms and uses them as defined in the Shows and Judges section published in the November magazine.

It is essential to use specific terms in show schedules so that the entry and classification committees, judges and exhibitors meet on common grounds. Let's use these terms correctly at all times.

Reserve the term "variegated" for foliage only, not for flowers.

Blossoms are described as multicolor when the petals have two or more different colors which may be mingled or the petals may have a different color edge. Only the ones with white edges are specifically designated "geneva" type.

The blooms which have light value (tint) and

dark value (shade) of the same color, eg., lavender and purple, are defined as two-tone. Such blooms may have a deeper or lighter edge, or a darker eye, may show the splashes described as "fantasy" markings, frequently the upper petals may be a dark value and the lower petals the light value, and many blooms have petals tipped with a darker value. When any such markings are in the same color varying only in value, this is a two-tone blossom.

Let's mean what we say when we use these terms: variegated, multicolor, geneva and two-tone. If you read the schedule and know that a "geneva" class means a class for only those plants with white edges, you understand the subject because you know the language.

DEADLINES are deadly! They must be observed if our Magazine is published on time. See page 3 under MAGAZINE for deadline dates.

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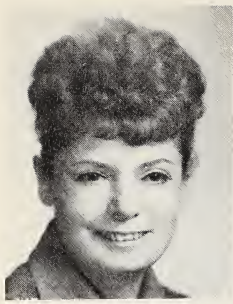
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Musings from the "Mini-Mam"

*Mrs. Sidney (Ellie) Bogin
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39 Boyd Street
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Having sucker troubles? Some of your minis ganging up on you? Have we got a plant for you! The new miniature, semiminiature and miniature semitrailers are the lazy one's dream. You can let them sucker to your heart's content, because like Topsy, that's the way they grow. As they sucker they extend to make room for the new crowns.

Of course, there has to be a certain amount of control or else they would not leave room for anything else in your home or in a show.

Rule of thumb follows: Semiminiature trailers: 10"-12". Use pots no larger than 3" or 4" standards. Miniature trailers: 8"-10". Use pots no larger than 3" or 4" standards. Miniature semitrailers: 6"-8". Use pots no larger than a 2½" or 3" squatty.

Some of the trailers will stay small no matter what size pot they are in and others will spread out beyond maximum size unless pruned and kept to size. Pruning is a new word in the violet lexicon, but qualifies in the grooming of trailers.

The difference between a miniature that suckers profusely and a miniature semitrailer is that the

former will eventually choke itself to death, and the latter will grow upwards and/or sideways to accommodate the new crowns.

We have much to look forward to in the realm of trailers. To quote my good friend, Lyndon Lyon, "There will be new, more vibrant colors such as the corals, the bicolors, white with blue and red edges, speckled and spotted kinds and varieties like 'Wild Country' with huge flowers nearly 3" in diameter. There will also be trailers in all of these colors with variegated foliage in miniatures as well as in the large sizes." I can't wait, can you?

We are completely out of the 1973 miniature lists but still have plenty of the 1974 supplements. Work has started on a new list and we would appreciate hearing from anyone who has hybridized or acquired new miniatures or semiminiatures within the last year. Perhaps, they may be cultivars that we have not heard of. Don't forget your LARGE self-addressed stamped envelope for the supplement.

Awards Needed for 1976 Atlanta Show

The Awards Committee is now receiving the special awards, trophies, etc., to be presented at the 1976 Atlanta Convention. Our long term sponsors are continuing to support us with their usual awards. However, many of the awards each year are given by members and friends living in the area and State near the show, therefore it is necessary to secure new sponsors each year for the next convention.

The sponsoring of an award, while very gratifying, is simple. We require a few basic rules: (a) All awards are accepted on the basis that any AVSA member is eligible for consideration, (b) The award must not present impractical judging problems or make unwarranted additional classes in the show schedule, (c) It is not possible to always allocate an award to a specific class, because many of our long term sponsors have been given awards for specific classes, also some other sponsor may have requested the class earlier.

The awards may be cash or some suitable item, the cash awards to be paid by check made out to

AVSA and mailed to Mrs. Richard A. Chase, Awards Chairman, 482 Rutherford Avenue, Redwood City, CA 94061. All other items other than cash are to be delivered to a location, that is mutually agreed to by the sponsor and awards committee. Mr. Jay W. Foster, 2650 Highland Avenue, Smyrna, GA 30080 will be the awards committee liaison with the committee responsible for the AVSA 1976 Convention and Show.

In order for an award, for the Atlanta Convention, to be included in the January 1976 issue of the African Violet Magazine, the Awards Chairman must be advised by September 15, 1975. The awards accepted after September 15 will appear in the Souvenir Booklet.

Awards for "Special Plants" should be in early, so that an exhibitor is aware in advance and may groom it for show. It is a pleasure to see the face of a winner when they receive their award. We thank all sponsors very much for their cooperation to make the Atlanta Show a success.

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FAITH (GG)—colossal dbl. white, biggest yet, great show plant
BLUE BELLE (GG)—large semi dbl. medium blue in full clusters
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RED MARVEL (GG)—multi petalled dbl. huge red, dark shiny foliage
MARGE (Maas)—fringed carnation type, dbl. Persian rose stars floriferous
GAIL (Maas)—dbl. pink fringed violet shaped blooms in clusters
NIGHT MAGIC (CH)—dbl. blue white edge, wavy foliage show plant
MIDGET MISCHIEF (CH)—profusion of deep pink stars, tiny vari. show plant
LYNNA (Utz)—huge dbl. pink, fuchsia border white edge striking
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From their pictures we have all the slide programs of our convention shows. It is wonderful to have pictures from past shows. We keep them for reference and future use. Most of all they are the recorded history of the development and advancement of the African violet plant. They are kept and they are used. Thanks to the farseeing members of AVSA who developed YOUR LIBRARY.

When you enjoy the slide programs please think of the time and effort of the many people involved in making them possible. We hope to continue and even improve this service to you. Your comments are of great value. In this issue of the magazine you will find the listings of all material available from the library. Study it over and look for the new programs coming out of the AVSA conven-

tion at Boston. These programs should be ready by the first of July. Send all requests for material to the AVSA Library, P. O. Box 1326, Knoxville, TN 37901. Mrs. Clarice Bell is very conscientious about seeing that all program requests are filled on time. This is a big job and we all owe Clarice a lot of consideration and appreciation for her good work.

Before returning your slide programs to Knoxville, check to see that all slides are included in their respective program and the box is properly wrapped for mailing. Return them FIRST CLASS to the Knoxville office as soon as you are finished using them. All these things help us to help you have a better library and African Violet Society of America members all benefit.

This summer while you enjoy the warm weather, don't forget to visit an African violet greenhouse, or better yet, your nearest commercial African violet hybridizer. You can learn a lot by talking to these interesting people. If it is not possible to do much traveling (and that may be a possibility) by all means order some of the lovely new varieties from the many ads found in your African violet magazine. I know I will!

Have a good growing summer!

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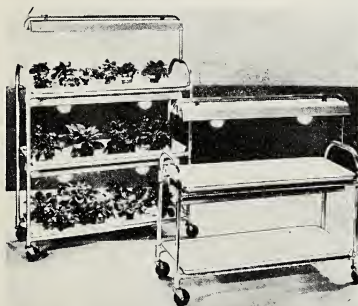


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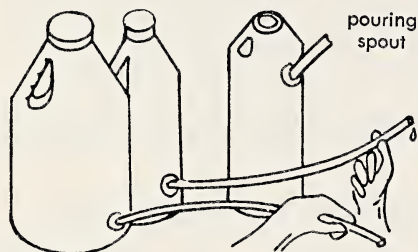
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TruBloom provides an even distribution of light so that your plants receive plenty of red radiation for bloom and plenty of blue to keep them compact. The colors in between are not ignored (otherwise this would not be a "natural" light) and contribute to plant growth and bloom in ways which are still little understood by scientists.

A no-glare light

Although TruBloom gives out as much light as other fluorescent lamps, some of it is not seen because it is in the invisible blue and red regions of the spectrum where it does most good to the plants. Therefore, the rays we can see are less intense and glaring. The strong yellows, oranges and reds which are particularly irritating to the eyes are not in evidence. The soft white light of TruBloom is simply a bit of outdoor light moved indoors.

Superior, long lasting blooms

Because TruBloom produces more compact plants the flowers make a finer show. Its bloom record is equal to the lamps which are strongest in far-red light but it does not create their distorted growth patterns. Its real superiority, however, will become evident if you keep track of the length of time the flowers stay fresh. African Violets,

Clerodendron, Lantana, Crossandra, Sinningias and orchids are only a sampling of the plants whose blooms last as much as fifty percent longer under TruBloom light than under other fluorescent tubes. If you intend to enter your plants in flower shows, growing and blooming under TruBloom will guarantee their freshness during the judging.

A long-life lamp

TruBloom is a premium-priced light, so naturally you expect longer lamp life for your money, and you really get it. Guaranteed lamp life is fifty percent longer than that for standard commercial tubes. This means less frequent replacements — a substantial economy.

Two full years of growing time

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Testing Lights for African Violets

*George A. Elbert, Immediate Past President
Indoor Light Gardening Society of America
128 W 58th Street
New York, NY 10019*

Recently I was asked whether I had done any testing of fluorescent lighting for African violets. That was an interesting question indeed when directed to me in particular and one with which I have not dealt much in print. I have been writing books and articles for some time and have acquired a fair degree of credibility nationally for my recommendations regarding plants, equipment and cultural methods. This has occurred in spite of the fact that at no time have I done any scientific experiments or conducted tests according to scientific method. The reason is that though I can never claim to have discovered THE right method for anything I have usually recommended some method which works in practice for a great many people.

My education includes a thorough understanding of scientific method. I can distinguish between the real and the false in this regard. The average amateur can not and readily accepts any findings described as scientific tests and emanating from an educational institution or laboratory as gospel — even if it does NOT work. Lots of people believe in science without ever examining it.

I am going to give you some of my conclusions as to the effectiveness of various fluorescent light sources, but first I would like to explain what has been going on and why I consider my way of investigating methods, plants, and equipment fairly reliable.

It took a number of years for investigators to establish that African violets bloom best if given a 12 to 14 hour day. This appears to be accurate. The equipment which was used in these tests — Cool White and incandescent bulbs — is no longer considered efficient for use in home growing. The trouble was with the incandescent bulb which is both uneconomical and awfully hot. In a laboratory, with special equipment for the purpose, the heat factor was no problem but in the home it is a nuisance and damaging to the plants.

The problem of day length is a straightforward one. The subject was specific. It did not concern itself with excellence of bloom, size of bloom, habit, leaf color or any number of other matters. Nevertheless, a considerable length of time was required to achieve a positive result.

Since then testing has had to do with these other matters — a potpourri of cultural questions applied to a genus which shows considerable variation between clones. And it rapidly became a

question of some commercial importance. Whose fluorescent lamp produced the finest African violets?

From the scientific point of view this is a highly complex matter. It is not sufficient to test lamp A against lamp B. It is not even sufficient to test lamp A against all other so-called "growth" lamps under the same laboratory conditions. A proper test would require that growth lamps be tested in comparison with all the commercial lamps and every reasonable combination of same. Even then we would only be at the beginning of a scientific test. We would have to grow a number of different clones under exactly same conditions under all these different sets of lights. That, too, would not be enough. Now we would have to experiment on the effect of temperature ranges, of different fertilizers, of different media, etc., The point is that we might find that lamp A was best under one set of cultural conditions and lamp K under another. That is a tremendous program and no one has been able or willing to invest in this kind of scientific research into the behavior of African violets.

Out of all this research we still might not have an answer which is really useful outside the laboratory. What you and I are interested in is how plants behave in our homes. We do not have laboratory conditions. We can increase the humidity. We can control heat and ventilation to a certain extent. We certainly have difficulty with exact watering. And certainly most African violet growers have only a limited ability to control the environment. The answer that the average grower wants is not even the same as in a greenhouse. It is one that is sufficiently generalized to give good results under a very large number of different growing conditions and cultural methods. In other words — any laboratory result over a spectrum of problems can be very wide of the mark when applied to home growing indoors... and under artificial light. There are certain problems which science can answer without too much outlay of time and effort — day length is one of them. But there are others which, without the necessary outlay, are necessarily treated superficially — hence unscientifically.

It must be admitted that many of the recent tests have been confined to one question. Does fluorescent tube A grow plants faster than tubes B

and C, etc? But, even here, the laboratories have limited their comparisons to one set of environmental conditions so that they are meaningless. But they are also meaningless in another sense — the utility of the information for the average grower. The public too easily jumps to the conclusion that a fluorescent tube which grows a plant faster is therefore “better”. Recently one manufacturer’s representative gave a graphic demonstration to an audience of the superiority of his “growth” tube — two slides of Gloxinias grown one with his tube and one with “their” tube. He pointed out that his tube produced a larger plant. Some one in the audience had the guts to tell him that the smaller plant was the better grown of the two. The audience agreed. Actually most of the “proof” of superiority offered by manufacturers of “growth” tubes touts effects which are the exact opposite of what the average house plant (and A.V.) grower wants.

There is another way of explaining the nature of these tests. They may be unscientific but they might have practical value — for commercial nurseries. But even this is not true. Commercial nurseries have to relate cost to efficiency. The evidence that some expensive “growth” tube develops plants quicker has to be related to the greater cost of the tube. So-called “growth” tubes have been generally rejected by commercial users.

The Elbert way of evaluating IS unscientific but, in respect to the needs of the consumer — the average house plant grower — it may well be more accurate. Just how do we do it?

Under very average conditions — indeed below average in some respects — we grow a wide spectrum of house plants with just two objectives — to find specific species or clones which grow and bloom particularly well under fluorescent light and to find out which fluorescent tubes are most efficient for the purpose, taking into consideration the matter of price. We live intimately with our plants and study them with the knowledge that our results will be published and must stand up in practice. We are not often deceived by some chance or short term phenomenon. We look for real reasons — a direct connection between cause and effect. While doing so we keep up as best we can with the latest developments in technology. We are also entirely immune to influence by advertisements and publicity. The fact that some company states a fact in print often simply means that it gets away with a misleading statement because nobody challenges it.

We do not have dozens of plants of one kind rowed up under different lamps. We just grow a great many different plants under different banks of lights. We don’t have either the room nor the manpower to conduct systematic experimentation. But our constant watchfulness — as in any skill —

has trained us to recognize and analyze differences in the reaction of plants. The method is not accurate, is not scientific, but nevertheless our batting average continues to be rather good simply because the so-called scientific methods used so far are (1) not sufficiently systematic either and (2) can be biased to benefit the product of one company or another. There is one other advantage we have. The work with the plants goes on continuously, year in and year out.

Since early in our activity growing house plants by artificial light we have always kept a part of our garden illuminated by WW and CW (Warm White/Cool White) tubes. These are the standard tubes most used in commercial lighting. They are the least expensive of all fluorescent tubes, and have the highest visible light output. In our light gardens we alternate them in the rows. We have tested every known brand of “growth” tube against them and have never found a one which was superior. We have expressed our preference in print and today a high percentage of indoor gardeners use this combination. The only disadvantage is that we must buy two kinds of tubes instead of one.

One odd feature of the comparison testing of fluorescent tubes has been the omission of “growth” lamps vs. combinations of commercial lamps such as Warm White and Cool White. We have been told that this has been overlooked because it has been assumed that these two lamps are too much alike to make any difference. Our experience is the opposite. Recently a laboratory did test Warm White and Cool White against their growth lamp. The results have not been published but we have heard that they were rather shocking — in favor of the combination.

What are our criteria in comparing tubes? We look for just the characteristics which we have observed that most amateur growers want in their plants. These are (1) relatively slow growth (2) short internodes — meaning compact, bushy plants, (3) good color in leaves (4) heavy production of flowers (5) good flower size (6) long flower life (7) and last but not least by any means — the esthetic effect. Engineers and scientists are not interested in the appearance of a tube. We think that one of the greatest stumbling blocks to wider use of fluorescent tubes in the home is poor color. We are accustomed to the yellowness of incandescent light but we object to any other unnatural light. This is because incandescent is basically a fire light — the same as fire, candle or oil lamp — to which humans have been accustomed for thousands of years. The odd coloration of fluorescent tubes is disturbing to our eyes. The only lamp which could prove satisfactory is one which provides a light which is true white and natural, like daylight. A number of “growth” lamps have claimed a natural

color but in practice they are very wide of the mark and are either more blue or red than the light to which we are accustomed. The popularity of Gro-Lux is confined to that segment of the indoor gardening population which considers that this particular type of lamp is "attractive" . . . certainly a very small minority. Warm White and Cool White in combination provide a yellowish light which is not nearly as distorting as some of the others. Of the "growth" lamps the one we have found most economical and efficient has been Gro-Lux Wide Spectrum but we have also experienced that its color varies considerably. Incidentally High Output lights have offered no advantage. You can do just as well or better by installing an additional normal fluorescent lamp — for instance, in a one foot spread, three tubes instead of two. In the long run this is more economical and efficient than installing High Output tubes.

All the evidence seemed to point to the likelihood that we had reached the limits of efficiency (except perhaps for an increase in lumen output) of fluorescent tubes for growing. If any further real progress was to be made in artificial lighting it would have to be some new kind of lamp. Small adjustments in the spectrum of the lamp seemed to offer no real progress. Then, about eight months ago, we started to test a lamp which was originally designed to give good color rendition for art studios, museums and displays, called Verilux. Within a few weeks we noticed substantial differences in our results with a large number of house plants using this light.

The results with African violets were especially convincing. It did not require laboratory testing to see the differences. But first we have to decide for ourselves just what an African violet grower desires in regard to the appearance and growth of his plants. In our opinion there is a long history of selective critique on this subject. He wants leaves of firm texture and good color which preserve horizontal position and grow with perfect symmetry. He wants flower stalks to develop from every leaf. The stalks, within the limitations of clonal characteristic, should be short, strong and stiff. Bud production should be large. Flowers should develop normally, be of large size, heavy texture and clean color. Each one should last as long as possible.

We have found with most growth tubes that this combination of characteristics was not easy to attain. Usually if the plant was too far away from the light the leaves reached upward for it. Or, if placed closer, they tended to bend downward. When we did not have the plants close to the lights the flowers did not develop well. How often have you seen prize plants with rather droopy leaves however large the cluster of flowers at the center?

(Hence the big plastic supportings.)

Our Verilux TruBloom (this is the trademark they now go under) lamps satisfied all the requirements. Even when the plants were 15 - 18 inches from the lights they did not reach. The leaf color was invariably fresher and brighter. The flowers developed even at that distance normally and on short peduncles. And the flowers lasted longer than they had ever done before.

So after having for years resisted "growth" lamps, here was one which really performed — and not only for African violets. We have tried it with equally good results on dozens of other genera.

So, after all these years the Elberts CAN approve a "growth" lamp. And we have no doubt whatever that your results will confirm our own. Especially if you are growing for show this is a marvelous lamp, which in addition to everything else will guarantee that your flowers will be in good shape for a longer time.

I am particularly impressed by the fact that this lamp produces also a really natural looking light. It is low in visible lumens, cool and nonglaring. Nevertheless, if you place a plant — or your hand — under this light it produces natural warm color rather than the "death warmed over" effect of the other white lights. This means that for the first time we have a light which is appropriate for use anywhere in the home. It will not distort the colors of your fabrics or your plants and is altogether comfortable for the eyes. That such a light is also a superb growing lamp is a tremendous boom to every African violet grower.

(Recognition is given to "The Indoor Light Gardening Book" (Crown), "Fun With Terrarium Gardening", (Crown), "Plants That Really Bloom Indoors" (Simon and Schuster), and "Fun With Growing Herbs Indoors" (Crown).

JUDGES AND EXHIBITORS NEWSLETTER

Subscribe before June 30 for three newsletters annually — July, November, February. Newsletters contain information on new rules pertaining to shows, judges and judging with questions answered.

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DEADLINES are deadly! They must be observed if our Magazine is published on time. See page 3 under MAGAZINE for deadline dates.

International Garden Tour

(ED. NOTE: This is the second article written by Anne Tinari concerning the tour she and her husband, Frank, made of European greenhouses and gardens at the International Flower Shows last summer).

From the charming Danish countryside of Copenhagen, dotted with royal castles, thatched cottages, flower gardens and rose-walled houses we spent an evening at the famous Tivoli Gardens which we found to be a fairyland of imaginative illumination, concert halls and open air theaters.

The following morning we boarded a large ferry boat to ride to Malmo, Sweden, a modern city that traces its history to the 12th century. Even before we landed we could see from the boat a party of friends waiting to greet us. Never shall we forget the warm and friendly greeting that Dr. Karl Wikesjo, Swedish greenhouse advisor, gave us with his wife and family as they welcomed us to Sweden.

Armed with bouquets of fragrant tea roses with cellophane and raffia they hung a bouquet on each of us. There was great excitement and fun on this reunion of old friends as our Tour Master Mr. Rathmell and other members had met this group when they visited the many gardens of interest in our country. Dr. Wikesjo was to be our guide.

Our next stop was Sweden's International Horticulture exhibit called Blom-Ma '74. For more than four hours we walked the great halls filled with flowers of every description. Once again as in the great flower show in Vienna there were dozens of African violet exhibits. A large exhibit which won a Gold Medal on Saintpaulias was by Sol Gardens Driverier Carl Nielson, Skegive. The large well laid-out display had names on many of the cultivars which read 'Linda', 'Ruby', 'Lyshla', 'Gigi', 'Lisa', 'Meta' and 'Elfriede'. The accent around the display were bright yellow mums and brilliant red Reiger begonias. Violets in the center were as many as 25 to 35 plants in 3½ to 4" clay pots in solid color groups with large white perlite as a top dressing for disguising the pot rims.

In another exhibit was a solid mass of all pink African violets bordered with achimenes. Many tropical plants were shown in areas where African violets predominated. Both African violets and huge flowering gloxinias were being sold right in the exhibit area. On one side of the exhibit hall was a large brick wall with flowering episcias, mostly the variety Eupreata, and other brilliant orange-red types. The whole show was one of beauty both indoors and for several acres on the outside.



IN EUROPE — Frank Tinari (kneeling at extreme left) and Anne Tinari (second row, extreme right) are shown with European growers and greenhouse operators. The photo was taken during their tour of International Flower Shows in Europe last summer.

Our visit to the Malmo flower auction the following morning was most interesting where a huge IBM automatic clock is used. The growers sit in an area that resembles an auditorium with desks that have direct communication lines to the principal auctioneer. It is run very orderly and in a strict business manner and hundreds and hundreds of boxes of fresh cut flowers all neatly packed in waterproof boxes are sold in the huge areas outside the auction room.

Our next stop was at the Buketten operation to see their modern packing hall for cut flowers and their pre-packaging of flower bouquets. There was no time for slow movers on this exciting greenhouse tour. In the entrance hall was a huge bouquet of summer flowers on a six-foot pedestal, bottom of the base was an open area planted with several dozen heavy flowering African violets. Lights overhead and large side windows provided the necessary light. The familiar African violets were a warm and welcome sight.

Our next stop was at the Scan-Flor Greenhouses, where we saw acres and acres of cut flowers and flowering plant material. Then on to the firm of K. E. Petterson to see a breathtaking sight of 5 acres of pot plants and lots of modern type mechanization to speed up production and handling. Many of the greenhouse ranges we visited were so proud of their clean and orderly boiler rooms, plant and potting machinery and their meticulous records of yearly planning and planting of crops.

Before we left Sweden we were all guests at the home of Dr. Wikesjo at a garden party he held for us in his beautiful garden and flower bedecked home. For two whole days he had been our marvelous guide and now this celebration was the culmination of a never-to-be-forgotten visit to Sweden.

Before we left, we paid a visit to Alnap Agricultural College where Dr. Jan Johansson, a graduate of Cornell University, described to our group Sweden's floricultural activities.

Returning to Copenhagen by hydrofoil and on to Scandinavian Airlines to Oslo the capital of Norway, which was to be our last destination. Our first visit in Norway was to their Agriculture University to visit the Department of Floriculture and Greenhouse crops under the direction of Dr. E. Stromme. One of the highlights of the tour in this country was a visit to the old stave churches, the world renowned Viking ships and the old original Viking graves.

The last greenhouse visit on our schedule was in Oslo at the world famous Thormod Hegg and Son greenhouses near Dramen. They are the originators and growers of the new improved cultivars of poinsettias, a firm of three generations of growers that are known the world over for their new poinsettia introductions. Then on to Jiffy Inter-

national which was most fascinating makers of the world famous Jiffy pots.

The last three days of our journey were spent in the Fjords in Norway, sights we shall long remember of barren reindeer mountains amid majestic mountain scenery some 3000 feet above sea level looking down to the sea.

It seems as we traveled homeward and reflected on the greenhouses visited and our conversation with other growers, their problems do not differ too greatly from growers in our own country. The high cost of fuel, building costs, repairs, ever increasing labor costs and necessary materials for keeping in motion a well-balanced growing program has made our industry a costly one and only through knowledge, perseverance and faith in the future can we keep pace with the great demand for well grown plant material to serve the public.

Fertilizing

If you are a soilless mix user, fertilize your violets with each watering, using the fertilizer at least 1/8th the strength recommended on the package. Use plain water about every fourth watering. If you use soil for your violets, fertilize about every two weeks during the active growing season. Again use less than the manufacturer recommends.

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Ruth M. Webster
Box 203 School St.
Tilton, NH 03276

(Mrs. Webster was one of the speakers at the AVSA Convention in Boston)

Growing Gesneriads is a fun thing. The variety offered in this great plant family inspires all who love plants and challenges those who seek a different look in growing.

Gesneriads are classified as tuberous, rhizomatous and fibrous-rooted. In each class there are miniatures, trailers and upright types.

TUBEROUS

The tuberous ones include the popular Sinningias. Recently, Reichsteinerias and X-Gloxineras have been reclassified as Sinningias. They grow rather large tubers with the former Reichsteinerias and X-Gloxineras sending out many sprouts which keep the plants blooming over a long period. *S. speciosa* looks better when kept to one crown. They all start easily from seed, but not all of them come true. Tubers like a pot about 1" larger all around than the tuber itself. Well fertilized planting medium is a must.

The standard type Sinningias may remain dormant for 3 or 4 months. They require special treatment. Retire them quite dry in their pots after blooming or remove them from their pots and store in a cool dark place until sprouts appear. At this point they can be transplanted into a rich medium and placed in strong light, watered sparingly until growing well, then watered copiously. All tuberous and rhizomatous types need lots of light and fertilizer. When they are getting enough light they grow sturdy. Usually, once a plant is budded it can be grown in lesser light and remain in good condition.

The tiny Sinningias are grown in terrariums and though small they need food to perform well. Many small ones set seed by themselves and drop their seeds on the medium where they sprout and make a thick carpet of plants which must be separated or they smother each other.

A plastic shoe box with a transparent cover makes a good container for growing extras to prick out and pot up at a moment's notice. Those lovely small ones, which are sterile, are propagated by a leaf. Again, a plastic shoe box makes a good propagating case. It takes a long time for some of them to make tubers. How do we know they are sterile? They never set seed by themselves but you

can often pollinate them with pollen from other kinds of plants thus making a cross. Crosses do not always produce varieties better than those already on the market but it is fun to try your luck. Those who have the know-how get the better seedling they set out to get. (Tongue in cheek).

Most tuberous plants do not like to have their foliage wet. The small Sinningias look awful when water gets on their leaves. Luckily, they will send up new growth when you mend your ways.

RHIZOMES

A lot of the same rules for growing good tuberous plants apply also to the rhizomatous types. Achimenes are the different ones here. They go completely dormant and should be harvested when quite dry. Since they form many rhizomes when well grown they must be separated and planted up five to a five-inch pot, covering them with 1" of potting medium. FEED THEM AND NEVER LET THEM DRY OUT. Most failure with Achimenes is lack of fertilizer and drying them out too often. Basket plants deluxe - - - they do indeed put on a grand show from spring to fall and in some instances, later. When rhizomes go dormant they must not be kept wet or they rot. As with all things they no longer need food and water. For the beginner, rest them in their pots and at the sign of a sprout, sift through the soil and remove all the rhizomes - - - then pot them up as directed above. Give good light at the start to make them sturdy. Out-of-doors is fine after danger of all frost is past but keep them in a bright shady spot - - - too much light makes the foliage unattractive.

Other rhizomatous types send up many sprouts after they make rhizomes. Four Kohlerias grown together in a large pot make an impressive showing. Once the sprouts are three or four inches high they can be knocked out of the pot and separated into nice plants with roots all formed. They grow quickly into sturdy plants when given good light.

Achimenes, Diastema, Gloxinia perennis, Niphaea, Phinaea, Kohleria, Koellikeria, Koellikohleria, Seemania, and Smithiantha are some of the most popular ones. Diastema, Niphaea, Phinaea, Kohleria in its smaller forms, Seemania, and Smithiantha in its dwarf form are good subjects for the window sill, in terrariums and under lights.

FIBROUS ROOTED

These plants are many. Some are large growing and some are compact. *Aeschynanthus*, *Alloplectus*, *Boea*, *Codonanthe*, *Columnnea*, *Chirita*, *Cyrtandra*, *Drymonia*, *Episcia*, *Heppeilla*, *Nautilocalyx*, *Nematanthus*, *Opithandra*, *Petrocosmea*, and *Saintpaulia* are in this group.

Some of these trail and some grow upright. *Alloplectus*, *Columnnea*, *Drymonia*, and *Nematanthus* have both types within the genus. The species *Columnneas* which grow upright are shrubby.

The most popular *Columnnea* in my greenhouse is *C. 'Yellow Dragon'*. Next are two compact ones — *C. 'Mary Ann'* (pink), and *C. 'Alpha'* (clear yellow). They are everblooming.

Good examples of rosette types are *Boea hygroskopica*, *Chirita sinensis*, *Opithandra primuloides*, *Petrocosmea nervosa*, *P. kerrii*, *P. parryorum* and *Saintpaulia*. Of late many new hybrid trailing African violets have given a new dimension to African violet growing.

For the most part all of these plants belonging to the African violet and *Gloxinia* (*Sinningia*) family do well in the soilless mixes. As long as the medium is porous and you feed your plants on a regular basis they should reward you with flowers. The new slow release pellets are very good when used according to instructions.

Most of the plants mentioned in this article are grown on a window sill, under lights and in terrariums as well as in the greenhouse.

A Family Project

Mrs. Ralph J. Duckworth
Rt. 4, Box 77 C
Waynesville, N. C. 28786

My husband and I are the proud parents of two sons. Dan is an eighth grader at Waynesville Junior High School and David is a second grade student at Crabtree-Junaluska Elementary School. My husband, Ralph, is an engineer at Champion International, Canton, North Carolina; while I am a housewife and mother who enjoys growing flowers—especially African violets—as a hobby.

I acquired my first violet about the time our youngest son, David, started kindergarten. It was such fun to put a leaf in a pot, water it, and see the new plants develop that I soon had our living room full! Our house faces the east and we have three huge windows (they are about five feet across) which provide excellent lighting for violets. Two active boys running in and out of the house with their friends provides both ventilation and

vibrations which plants need. Of course, there were accidents sometimes; but I found that if a plant got turned over the broken leaves were easy to root and the extra handling to re-pot it just seemed to make it grow better!

Needless to say, my collection of violets soon outgrew the living room, so Ralph installed fluorescent lights over shelves in our basement. To compensate for the extra electricity cost, I switched to cold water for the laundry. By fall of 1973, we had about 30 African violets, along with assorted ferns, gloxinias, and *episcia* plants in the living room and several hundred more plants in the basement. My collection of plants was soon to become a family project . . .

In January, 1974, I had to undergo major surgery and was unable to do much of anything for nearly three months. Ralph and our two "D's" watered my plants once a week at just the right temperature and saw to it that the lights were on before they left for work and school each morning. They even took turns describing the plants which had started to bloom since my last trip downstairs before I went to the hospital! They really did an excellent job. Imagine the treat that was mine when I finally went downstairs and saw so many violets in bloom—it was like summer in March! Of course, I still had to have a lot of help in caring for all those plants even after I was able to "do a day's work" and Ralph and the boys were very willing helpers.

The violets which our family grew and cared for last year have been shared with relatives, friends, and neighbors for many different "special occasions". We enjoy giving a gift that we all had a part in producing. This is the advice we give when one of our violets goes to a new home:

1. Provide a northern or eastern exposure. Filtered light is actually best for a new plant until it gets over the shock of being moved.

2. Do not over-water! Clay pots are more porous than plastic or styrofoam pots and require more watering. Water a growing plant only when the soil feels dry to increase the root system. A blooming plant should feel moist at all times.

3. Re-pot plant to the next largest size pot only when the roots are pushing out the drainage hole in bottom of pot.

4. To control pests I hang a Shell No-Pest Strip near the plants. Mealybugs are easy to remove with a Q-tip dipped in alcohol. Rinse the plant well with warm water to get rid of the alcohol.

5. Violets do grow better if their leaves are clean. Give a warm shower occasionally, but be sure the leaves are dry before sun strikes them.

6. Always be sure the soil is damp before applying a liquid fertilizer.

7. Perhaps the most important advice though, is enjoy the beauty of this flower!

From There to Here With All My Plants

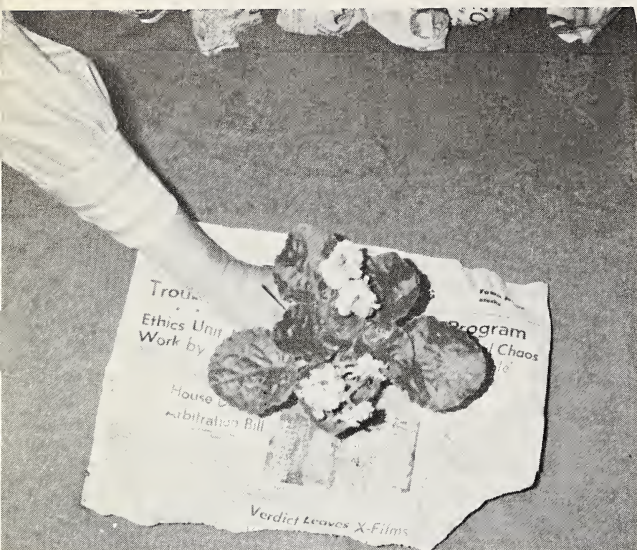


Figure 1

Sandra Leary
438 Brady Lane
Austin, Texas 78746

It is an accepted fact that whenever an African violet grower, in the course of his or her travels, gets within shouting distance of another grower, the traveler is going to return home with some new plants. That's the way it is and we wouldn't change it for the world. On the other hand it can become a mind-boggling problem trying to figure the actual mechanics of getting these plants home, especially if "home" is across the country and we are flying.

This problem became especially acute for me as I attended my first national convention, saw all those gorgeous new varieties, and set out to buy one of each. Then we got loaded onto buses and hauled off to African violet "heaven", a batch of commercial greenhouses. There we all dashed frantically about, filling trays with plants we wanted to buy as if violets were about to become extinct. But the plants were all so different from what we had back home; and since these greenhouses didn't ship, it was our only chance to obtain some of their varieties.

Back at the hotel, as the dust began to settle, we surveyed our rooms, which now looked more like the aftermath of a greenhouse garage sale. We began to worry about getting the plants home; but it didn't seem to be such a critical problem at that

moment since we still had three more days of convention to think about it. As the days flew by, we each kept adding a plant or two to our collection as we visited and revisited the commercial sales room. But inevitably the night-before-departure-day arrived.

We discussed the possibilities among ourselves and then scattered to beg boxes, newspapers, string, and tape from hotel employees. As we returned one by one from our "scavenger hunts" we began to come up with a few ideas. It's amazing how inventive we can be when we have to be. It's also amazing to see what violet people will do for the sake of their plants!

One friend packed her plants as carefully as she could with what she had gathered. Then she took a taxi to the post office, mailed them to herself back home, and crossed her fingers as she saw them go bouncing down the mail chute. Another grower, after shrewdly eyeing her plants, and the clothes she had brought with her, shipped her clothes home and filled her suitcases with the plants! Several gals jettisoned part of their cosmetics and wadded their clothes up, to make room for plants among their belongings. Anyway, we eventually got home with our plants, a bit bedraggled, but alive.

Since that first trip, I have worked out a very simple, efficient method for traveling with plants; and even I am amazed at how many plants I can carry. And I always CARRY my plants. I know that if I don't let them out of my sight, they will have a much better chance of getting home in good condition. My method was designed specifically for air travel, but, of course, will work just as well for travel by automobile or any other means of transportation.

My "carrier" is a cardboard box which I got from a paint company. The box originally contained four one-gallon cans of paint. I had checked with airline companies and this box is the largest size you are allowed to carry on board the plane with you. Anything larger will have to be checked with the rest of your luggage; and this may prove to be fatal to your plants in some baggage holds, or if the box ends up sitting on a baggage cart in freezing weather for hours. This box will (and it must) fit under the seat in front of you in the airplane. By the way, I have learned that when I go to the ticket counter at the airport, I do not ask the clerk if I may carry this box onto the plane with me. If the clerk is not sure about it, he will play it safe and say you must check it with your



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5

luggage. I try to avoid scenes in public places. So I simply set it down next to me on the floor while I am checking in with the reservation counter, and pretend it isn't there for the moment.

Since so many people have asked me to describe in detail just how I do get from there to here with all those plants, I decided to photograph the actual packing and unpacking of my travel box from the last convention. Perhaps my suggestions will help someone else to improve their methods, or inspire them to think of even better ways.

Figure 1 shows the typical average sized plant usually purchased. Note that the pot size is 3 or 4 inches. I allow the plants to dry out a little (but not to the point of wilt) so that they will be neither too brittle when packed nor too heavy when carried all together. Starting at the bottom of the plant, Figure 2, I gather the plant leaves upward to compact the plant and protect the crown. If the grower I have purchased the plants from has provided cellophane sleeves for the plants, I slip the plants with leaves gathered upward into the individual sleeves, keeping the plant compacted and easy to handle. See Figure 3. If no sleeves are available, I proceed to the next step by just holding the plant in my hand with the leaves gathered by my fingers. In Figure 4 I have laid the plant on its side on a half sheet of newspaper and will now roll it firmly in the paper, folding down each gathered end of the newspaper after it is rolled.

The next photo, Figure 5 shows the box with 29 (count 'em) blooming plants rolled in their newspaper covers, and one large plant which was too brittle to gather without breaking most of the leaves. On one occasion the plant left unrolled was a show plant which went to show, won a ribbon, and came home nestled in this box, none the worse for wear. So far the most plants I have packed into this box this way numbered 48, but I expect to try for a new record any day now.

The next photo, Figure 6 shows the way the

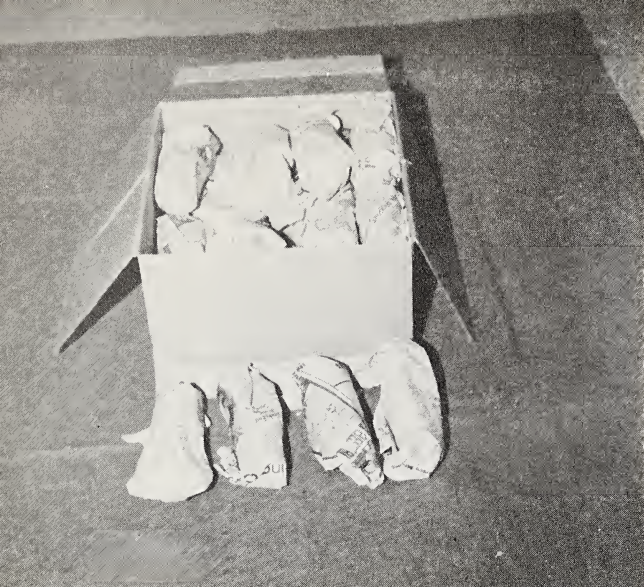


Figure 6

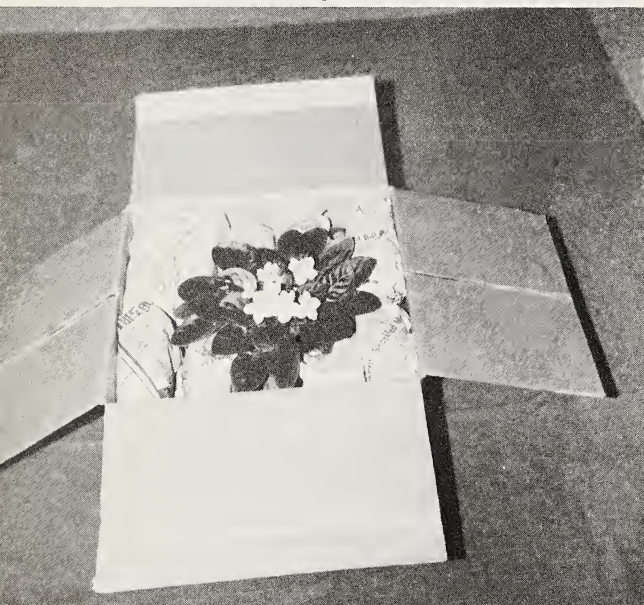


Figure 7

wrapped plants are stacked like corncocks into the box in layers on their sides. A "well" is left in the center to accommodate the unwrapped plant. See Figure 7.

The box is then closed, but not taped or fastened permanently, as it will have to be opened and inspected at the airport security checkpoints before boarding the plane. I have experienced a variety of reactions from security personnel when they open the box and discover all those rolls of newspaper. The most common reaction is a rolling of the eyes heavenward as I explain that these are my precious African violets. I tactfully suggest they select one or two at random and open them (as they are really supposed to open each one, but you'd never make your plane on time). They are usually grateful for this way out and quickly pass you through.

I tie a piece of sashcord around the box, as



Figure 8



Figure 9

shown in Figure 8, both to secure the box and to provide a carrying handle. Be careful here that you don't get too fine a cord or use a wire, as the weight of the box will cause a line or wire to cut through your hand as you race through airports.

So, the box and I have now made it from our AVSA Convention to Austin, Texas, through several changes of plane. I arrive home anxious to show off my new plants. As I unwrap each one, Terry, my long-suffering husband, admires and comments on their beauty and good condition. Figure 9 is living proof that the plants all 30 of them, arrived at their new home with scarcely a ruffled leaf or tattered blossom.

I will now put my box and its sashcord up in the top of the closet till next time, when it may carry another winning plant or arrangement to the show, and return home with untold treasures from greenhouses afar.



*Helen Freie
Affiliate Chairman
4854 N. Cedar Ave.
El Monte, CA 91732*



When you were a child and your grandmother used to say, "My how time does fly," you would look up at her and think, "Not so! Not so!" But, today it is so. The new year of 1975 is almost half gone, and so far, it has been a rewarding half year. More and more affiliates are complying with my requests. You did start paying your dues early but still, not enough of you. I wonder how many have given your treasurer the authority to pay your AVSA dues for the next year before the end of the current year? Why don't you do it now? This could be sort of a Christmas present to Mrs. Bell in the Knoxville office and me in mine. If you only knew how it alleviates the work load for us in February and March you would. Then I could honestly mean it even more, when I wish you a Happy New Year.

My what wonderful shows you are having this year!! That's because your schedules are getting better all the time. You are not forgetting to list all the show information in the front of your schedules: Club name, Theme, Place and dates of show, Hours of viewing, Admission if any, Sales Tables, Plants, Supplies, Snack bar, and the time of Culture classes. Then the most important of all listings - THE AVSA COLLECTION AWARD. Somewhere near Sections I, II, or III. Don't forget to call it by its proper name and explain right here what this award really is. Remember, my friends, that these are some of the best and most beautiful plants in your show. Show them off in the very choicest place in the show room, then some place near by, your AVSA culture folders. Then stand by and watch your plant sales zoom.

Now for Council, State and Regional groups: Please do list the AVSA SILVER SWEEPSTAKES

AWARD this way and make sure the name and address of the winner comes back to me, Helen Freie, Affiliate Chairman, immediately after the show for listing in the magazine.

One more thing: If you want your affiliate and current president listed in the November magazine please see that I get the name and address and zip code by July 1st. I would like to see everyone correctly listed, and, don't forget if your Society is 100% AVSA members you get a star before your name. Here I am dreaming again of stars all over the pages. Not So!! Not So!! I am looking out my window and wishing this on the Morning Star. Be sure to read my column in the September issue for the winners of the Standard Show Awards.

NEW AFFILIATES

This month we welcome into affiliation these four new African violet organizations:

AFRICAN VIOLET CLUB OF GREATER ATLANTA

Mrs. Miriam K. Greene, Pres.
4204 Cheryl Ann Court,
Stone Mountain, GA 30083

AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY OF MONTROSE

Mr. George Carpentier, Pres.
2358 Montrose Ave.
Montrose, CA 91020

FIRST AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY OF AMARILLO

Mrs. Kim Adair, Pres.
3710 Clearwell
Amarillo, TX 79109

FORT ONTARIO AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY

Mrs. Norman J. Gillette, Pres.
RD #3, Brown Drive,
Oswego, NY 13126

AVSA STANDARD SHOW ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Every year there are about a dozen of these awards made at the annual convention, this year in Boston, MA. This is a superior show award given to those organizations that were awarded a show point score of 95-100, during the year from Jan. 1 to Dec. 31. Special congratulations go to these affiliates:

THE AFRICAN VIOLET CLUB OF GREATER KANSAS CITY (MO)

ALEXANDRIA AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY (ALEXANDRIA, LA)

CENTRAL FLORIDA AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY (ORLANDO, FL)
THE MONTGOMERY AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY (AL)
METROPOLITAN ST. LOUIS AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY(MO)
CORPUS CHRISTI AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY (TX)
VIOLET HARMONY CLUB (TX)

THE AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY OF STATEN ISLAND (NY)
AFRICAN VIOLET SOCIETY OF UTAH (SALT LAKE CITY)
FRAYSER AFRICAN VIOLET CLUB (MEMPHIS, TN)
THE FIRST AFRICAN VIOLET STUDY CLUB OF ASHTABULA, OH
UNION COUNTY CHAPTER OF THE AVSA (NJ)

BOYCE EDENS
RESEARCH FUND

Mrs. Paul O. Gillespie, Sr.
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AVSA BOOSTER
FUND

Mrs. Dorothy Gray, Chairman
Serendipity Mobile Home Village
3135 U. S. 19 North, No. 180
Clearwater, Fla. 33515

- Honor that Show Chairman who made your African violet show the success it was by having her name listed in this column by a contribution to this fund. Your local African Violet Society's name will also be published as the donor honoring your Show Chairman.
- Anonymous, in memory of
Dr. V. Van Zele \$ 10.00
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Nassau, Bahamas 10.00

Watering Violets

Along with light and humidity, watering is very important in the culture of African violets and must be done with care and concern. It is important to use warm water, at least a few degrees warmer than room temperature. Water from the top or bottom, but learn when to water and don't just water on a time schedule or by habit.

AV Culture Discussed At Convention Workshop In Boston

Growing Culture In New England

Mrs. Mary V. Boose
9 Turney Place
Trumbull, CN 06611

Growing in New England, is really no different than growing anywhere else. It may be hard to raise the humidity in some areas, in others, the humidity may be so high that it would cause a mildew problem.

Concerning culture in New England, let's begin at the base of the plant, the soil. My soil is mixed a bushel at a time. After each ingredient is added, the soil is mixed thoroughly. It is mixed over and over again. When it is finished, it is very porous. After mixing is completed, it is tested for the pH. This to me, is very important. This soil is used right from the beginning, from the time the leaf is planted to maturity.

Leaves are planted in the soil in 2½" pots. When the plantlets reach a good size, they are carefully separated and each plantlet is put into its own 2½" pot. The bottom four leaves are removed by pulling down gently, they will snap off. Finger nails are also used as you would pinch off a blossom. The plantlets are watered lightly with 1/8th strength fertilizer. A completely water soluble fertilizer is used, right from the time the plantlets are separated. After growth begins, ¼th strength fertilizer is used.

When the plants are strong and the roots are coming thru the bottom of the pot, it is time for a larger home. If they are robust growers, they are transplanted into 4" pots, where they may grow to better advantage. A small leafed plant is transplanted into a 3" or 3½" pot. When transplanting, a dull paring knife is used to scrape the main stem. If there is scar tissue where leaves have been removed, scraping helps to bring out new roots.

Sometimes when I am pressed for time, a pressure pump is used for watering, otherwise, the watering can is dipped into a 10 qt. pail containing fertilizer. The water is poured over the plant, trying to avoid the crown. Each plant is tilted to remove excess water and is given a quarter turn.

A fertilizer high in nitrogen is used once a month. This gives the foliage good color. A number of fertilizers are used to give good balance.

Since all fertilizers are labeled as to content, it is not hard to figure out what should be used. The first number is for nitrogen; this gives good color to the foliage. The second number is for phosphorous; this helps to give bloom. The third number is for potash; without this, you would not have a good root system. You need a good balance for a good plant.

About three or four times a year, the plants are drenched with malathion. This is to make sure that there are no uninvited guests. Follow directions, no matter what you use.

Lights are on from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. About eight weeks before show time, they are on two hours longer. There is a fan on the cold air return of the furnace. The coolest air from upstairs is brought down and keeps the basement at about 68° even in the coldest winter storm. The fan runs 24 hrs. a day, 365 days a year. It is warm in winter and cool in summer.

A four by eight foot shelf is kept for show plants. They are grown here all year. August is the time when show plants are chosen for the spring show. Vigorous plants are looked over for shape and number of blossoms per stem. The plants are disbudded and are transplanted into 6" pots. They are set low in the pot so the lower leaves can be removed and more soil is added. They are watered lightly until growth begins. Blossoms are cut off until a given time. Plants are checked often for suckers.

When show time arrives, plants are checked carefully. They are watered well the night before packing. If there are lower leaves that have lost their color, they are removed, being careful not to spoil the shape of the plant. Spent blossoms are removed at the last minute. Selecting a box is important. Who wants a show plant with a broken leaf?

May the TLC that has been given, show to its best advantage, good shape, a good head of bloom and good color. We should all be good losers. We have done our best. Now all we can do is HOPE. Not every plant can be an Award Winner.

Violet Culture And Its Meaning

Mrs. Joan Steckowych
1235 Island Pd. Rd.
Manchester, NH 03103

When I receive a new violet, my aim is to grow

it to its fullest potential. That means loads of beautiful blossoms, the deepest and most vibrant color possible for that particular variety, and, of course, gorgeous symmetrical foliage.

To achieve this, one cannot simply put the

plant in front of a window or under fluorescent lights, one cool white and one Gro-Lux wide spectrum, which are kept on for 12 to 14 hours a day. My temperature is kept about 70 degrees during the day and 65 at night. The humidity is approximately 60 per cent. I use a very light soilless mix with added goodies. Watering is done as the plants feel dry and this is about twice a week. I fertilize my violets once a week alternating about eight different brands being sure they are all of different analysis using one quarter strength. Faded blossoms and yellowing leaves are kept picked off and the same applies to suckers.

When a plant's roots fill the pot, it is potted up to the next size pot which is no more than one inch larger than the one it came from.

Sometimes an older plant develops a neck due to the loss of older leaves, or looks just plain tired out, so I pot it down. To do this remove the plant from the pot and cut off about one inch of roots from the bottom of the plant and trim slightly all around. Because you have cut away some roots you must remove some of the older leaves to compensate for the root loss. In doing this keep in mind the symmetry of the plant. Then, using the same size pot or smaller, put a little fresh soil in the bottom and set the plant in so that the neck will be just below the rim of the pot. In a few weeks your violet will be like new again and full of beautiful blossoms, which will be a delight for you to look at.

I find growing violets in this way is one of the most self rewarding hobbies one can enjoy.

Aims To Grow Fewer And Better Plants

*Mrs. Jessie Crisafulli
Belchertown, MA*

If anyone were to ask me how I grow violets, I'd probably say, "Barely tolerably."

I have about 600 plants ranging from African violet leaves in 2½" pots, plantlets waiting to be divided, small plants in 2½" pots, medium in 3" pots, and larger ones in 4" and 5" pots.

These are in the cellar, every window in the house, 20 of them, and in a sun porch with windows on three sides. The plants in the windows are on tables as most sills are too narrow to hold any except for some miniatures. There are hanging pots in every window, most of them gesneriads, including Episcias, Columnea, Aeschynanthus, Nematanthus, and an assortment of house plants.

Most of my plants are window grown and days are too short in New England from September to April to get good results. They bloom satisfactorily, but there is not enough steady light to have the leaves shape up well and do not qualify as show plants.

I have a fluorescent light set-up in the cellar, a small one. It is a 4 x 6 foot, 3-tiered table. Each shelf has two fixtures of two bulbs each, cool white bulbs. The lights are on 14 or 15 hours a day, with an automatic timer. I get much better results with the plants under lights.

Two years ago we built a glassed-in sun porch. At first I had visions of filling it completely with plants, but my family made it clear that they expected to use the porch also, so my plant space is limited. Although it gets quite cool in the winter I kept violets in the porch this past winter, and they did not seem to suffer too much. It slowed their growth, but they bloomed well.

We use the porch for supper each day and then

we will have a fire going in the fireplace, so the temperature would vary from 80 degrees when a fire was going to about 60 degrees at night, but the violets were O.K. In the porch I also have large hanging plants, plants on shelves, on stands and on the floor which is tile and cold; different house plants and gesneriads. The columneas, fuchsias, ivy and philodendron hanging, the streptocarpus, gloxinias, azaleas, and poinsettia on the floor, all growing well despite temperature fluctuation. Some of the plants have earned blue ribbons and special awards.

I like to start small plants; African violets from leaves and offsets, gesneriads and house plants from cuttings and some from seed, as a result I always have too many plants.

Speaking of temperature the plants throughout the house are grown in a range from very warm in a sunny window in summer to a cold window sill in winter. I do temporarily cover or protect the plants from the strong sun from March to September.

I do not do anything special about humidity. I use some pebble trays, think of misting but do not get to it. The plants grouped close together create some humidity I suppose. Our house conditions vary from humid summer to hot dry heated rooms in winter. My watering schedule varies on account of it, but I have not yet tried to control and humidity.

Last summer I put most of my large plants on wick watering. I had put off doing this for a long time, never seeming to have enough time to get to it. I was pleased at the improvement in the plants on wicks, they grew larger, more compact, had

better color and were sturdier, probably due to the fact I had not been too regular in watering and sometimes the plants would get bone dry and then flooded. I use strips of nylon stockings and any container I can get hold of.

I use diluted Peter's Fertilizer every time I water. I have to water about twice a week in winter to about once a week in summer, some 600 plants, about 100 of them on wicks, the rest in saucers or trays. Needless to say I spend a lot of time with plants.

On potting — I favor plastic (with clay I'd spend every day watering). I like the rolled top edge plastic pots if I can get them, sizes varying from 2" to 4", this year for the first time I used 5" pots for my larger plants. I use Buell's sterilized soil, 2 parts soil to 1 part vermiculite and 1 part perlite; and add some charcoal and systemic insecticide.

I have had some experience with insects so I try to keep a watchful eye on the plants. I have stopped bringing in flowers from the garden and am careful where I buy plants and isolate new ones. I spray occasionally, no more than necessary, since I find I'll sometimes do more damage with the spray than the insects do.

The types of plants I grow include gesneriads, miniature and large, and I put houseplants in places where I cannot put violets. I have some Saintpaulia species and I have done well with these in shows. They grow naturally and are easier for me to make show quality in windows than are African violet hybrids.

Up to this year I have never grown a particular plant for a show. I used to look over what I happened to have at show time and bring whatever looked suitable. I would get some ribbons, a few blues, some of the other colors!

In conclusion, my aim now is to reduce the number of plants I have. When I first became aware of African violets my ambition was to own one of each variety. This idea lasted until I had about 50 plants and I realized that with some 30,000 named varieties it would be impossible, I don't have the room anyhow. I would like to grow fewer and better plants, but I'll continue to grow African violets because I don't wish to be without them.

Light

Perhaps the most important item for good culture of African violets is light. Give all possible light and as much sun as possible without bleaching or burning the foliage. No summer sun except perhaps very early morning sun, filter with a curtain or other means.

Questions For Lifetime Judges

The Lifetime Judges questions will be ready for mailing early in August, it was learned from Ruth Carey, AVSA chairman of shows and judges.

If you would like to receive a set of questions before the September issue of the African violet magazine is mailed out, send in your check of \$1.00 during the summer to: Mrs. James B. Carey, 3900 Garden Drive, Knoxville, TN 37918. Judges applying for the first time must send evidence they have met the requirements.

IN MEMORIAM

Mrs. Anna Egenites

It was with much regret we learned of the death of Mrs. Anna Egenites, mother of Leila Egenites of Annalee's Violetry. Mrs. Egenites passed away early in February at her home in Bayside, NY. Mrs. Egenites and her daughter have been operators of Annalee's Violetry for a number of years.

Edward Hengeveld

The Long Island African Violet Society regrets to report the death of Edward Hengeveld of East Rockaway, NY. Mr. Hengeveld was a dedicated violet grower, very helpful to new members, and friendly to everyone.

Our Sympathy

We were sorry to learn of the death of Mr. and Mrs. Fred Tretter's daughter, Jean, who had been ill several months. She passed away March 4. Funeral services were held in St. Louis, MO.

Ethel Wittner Brewer

Chicago area African violet growers were saddened to learn of the passing of Mrs. Ethel Wittner Brewer on January 12, 1975. Ethel, who was the New Varieties columnist of the African Violet Magazine for many years, was also well known for her presentations of the new varieties programs at AVSA Conventions.

In 1971, after her husband John's death she moved to Cincinnati, Ohio. She later married Charles Brewer who survives her.

An avid promoter of the African violet, Ethel was a charter member of the Exhibitor's Club, a past president of the '55 African Violet Club, a member of the Illinois African Violet Society and the African Violet District Council of Northern Illinois. She will be missed by her many friends.

J. S. Berry

It is with much sorrow that we announce the death of J. S. Berry of Houston, Texas, husband of one of our well known advertisers. Mr. Berry died rather suddenly earlier this year. Our sincere sympathy to Mrs. Berry and her family.

Question Box



By Anne Tinari, Tinari Greenhouses
2325 Valley Road, Huntingdon Valley, Pa. 19006

Q. Dear Anne: Periodically three or four of my plants get soft mushy brown spots on the leaf ends and eventually spread over the entire leaf.

A. If they are the lower outer leaves this can be a rather normal aging process and promptly removed. Also this can be a fungus that can be caused by excessive watering, inadequate drainage and cool soil or possibly a pot that is too large. Be sure to space plants so that you have proper air circulation. Fluctuating temperatures and unstable watering conditions can add to this perplexing problem.

Q. How much Cygon 2E should be used both for my safety and for the plants safety to control the soil mealy bug? The bottle of Cygon 2E only gives data regarding outside use. I grow my violets under artificial light in the basement and bring the bloomers up and display throughout the house. I want no risk to anyone in the use of the chemical and must have precise data regarding its use.

I am hybridizing some plants and want the data on how to register the cross, if it is a new cross.

A. Truthfully, it is difficult to give specific information on any of these insecticides which I certainly am not positive of their safety in the home. Here in the greenhouses when materials of this nature are used, a mask for safety is always worn when using the most potent materials. Oxygen mask, boots and raincoats are all used as a safety precaution.

I am told by people using this material that the proportion of a drench is $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp to a gallon of water plus detergent and repeat the dose in 10 days, using a Cygon drench every 6 months to control soil mealy bug. Always use with extreme caution.

Ever since materials with aldrin content which included the excellent product Dr. "V" were removed from the market I am truly at a loss to tell the small home grower how to eradicate this pest in safety.

Regarding the registering of plants, you should write to our plant registrar, Mrs. Adele Tretter, 4988 Schollmeyer, St. Louis, MO 63109 for more information on registering.

Q. Enclosed is a leaf off one of our African

violets which we are raising in our office. All of the older leaves have these spots and this is the worst. None of the violets have bloomed, spots do not prevent new leaves from growing, the older leaves seem to get the spots. We have been spraying with Malathion once every five days with no success . . . please help!

A. The leaf sent was quite black from freezing and very hard to diagnose in this state. However, I would venture to guess that they have contracted a type of scale. They adhere much like a tick would and are almost impossible to get off without causing cell damage to the plants. Violets rarely get this malady but it can be transmitted to them from green plants. The Spider plant is a good case in point or any hanging plant is a good carrier where infested plants could drop old leaves or material to carry them to another plant.

It is most difficult to eradicate. Would advise removing as many lower outer leaves as possible before they spread to the crown of the plant.

Q. Dear Anne: I need your advice. I find no mention is made by growers of whether or not they use only sterilized soil or any other methods of controlling pest and disease. I am in doubt as to whether it would be safe or wise to buy from these people. Are cut leaves generally safer from pest and disease than whole plants and is there any way to tell whether they're healthy or not? Also are there any guidelines for picking out who to do business with?

I grow violets strictly organically and have never had need to use insecticides.

A. I certainly understand your concern for healthy plants. My suggestion would be to deal directly with the growers and ask them the specific questions you are concerned about with soil, etc.

I feel that one of the best sources would be advertisers in the African Violet Society of America magazine. Most of the commercial members I know in the society are very conscientious growers. However, you should deal direct with the ones you particularly choose. I do believe that all try to maintain a high standard.

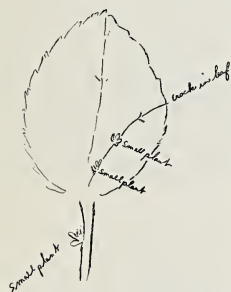
One suggestion I would make is that no matter where you get your plants or cuttings that you

transfer them promptly into the type soil that you have been successful with yourself.

Q. I have violets that are in bloom, the leaves get flimsy and droop. What is wrong?

A. I'm afraid you have not given me sufficient information about your plants to discover the problem. However, I would make some suggestions. When a plant is in full flower you may find it needs more water to support the excess energy being used. On the other hand, if you are overwatering the results would be the same. Much would depend on the atmosphere in your room and the surrounding area. Plant food used very mildly and often is also a help to flowering plants, to keep them in their performance state.

Also be careful not to keep plants too close to a cool window during the cold months as this too, can cause leaves to become very limp.



Q. I have, not exactly a problem, more of a puzzle, with my leaf from a 'Ruffled Queen'. Please see from the sketch I have enclosed the small plants on the stem and two on a crack in the leaf that have developed but the stem won't root. I have had to cut the stem back twice as it rots on the end. I just put it back in new soil after trimming the

rotted section off and it is as good as new.

A. The variety 'Ruffled Queen', which we used to grow some 15 years back, is almost non-existent. It was a difficult variety to propagate. Any of the thick leaved varieties usually are. The easiest way we found to root them is to cut the petiole or stem to about 1½ to 2" and insert in a medium of ½ sand and ½ vermiculite which we are very successful with here. It also helps to dip the end of the stem in a hormone powder such as Proliferol Power for a more even growth. Sometimes these little plantlets that grow over the leaf as you suggest can be removed very carefully and rooted in a medium of this type, but usually they are too fragile to really exist once they are taken off the mother leaf.

Q. I am having a problem with the leaves of some of my plants. It seems the leaves reach up. This is happening in particular with wavy-edged leaves. They just seem to have petioles growing straight up. They are under lights next to other plants that grow absolutely flat.

Also, should the lower row of leaves on a plant

be removed if they start to bend down?

A. In answer to your problem with wavy edged leaves growing straight up, several things can possibly help. Leaves of this type as well as variegated varieties are many times subject to better, flatter growth by putting them under the ends of your violet trays rather than directly under the lights. Also, you did not say how far the lights were above your plant tops. The average distance (according to size plants) can be as low as 6 to 12" high, certainly no further. By adjusting the lights you can many times control the growth pattern of the plants.

Another thing to consider is the type plant. There are some varieties that simply grow in an upright manner and cannot be as readily affected for growth pattern as others.

In regard to the lower row of leaves, they should be removed if they are baby leaves or secondary leaves as we call them, not growing in proper proportion to the plant or if the chlorophyll is spent from them and they are not in a healthy looking condition. It is far better to remove them from the plant rather than to have them as a dragging support to an otherwise firm and vigorous looking plant.

Q. My plants are constantly in bloom, but is there any way I can find out their names? I have a purple and white violet which seems to be reverting to solid purple. Everytime it blooms it seems more and more of the blooms are solid purple. Is there some way to stop this? Most all my plants seem to be getting a deeper color on the blooms. All my plants are grown under fluorescent lights and are set on gravel trays with water added for humidity.

What causes single flowers to drop so fast?

A. Many plants are quite recessive and go back to the original color. The only way one can find names is through growers catalogs or many times back issues of the AV magazine can help you do this.

Bottom leaves turning yellow can be due to natural aging causes and should be removed. Single older types do have premature blossom drop, but newer singles being developed have greater longevity and have been developed and improved over the years.

Dear Readers . . . I am always grateful for tips received. The first two were sent in by one of our board members and I am glad to share them with you.

Tip 1 — If you must make drainage holes in plastic, a soldering iron with a small point does it easily and quickly.

Tip 2 — Styrofoam cups, meat trays, etc which are usually thrown away can be recycled for use as drainage in the bottom of terrariums and containers with no drainage. It can be cut up into any size you want by putting in a blender with water. If ground small enough it could probably be used in place of perlite, which is becoming harder to find in your soil mix. If sterilized in boiling water it might be reused if needed. I find I can use all I can get hold of! Don't try to grind too much at a time or you'll ruin your blender. I find I can do 4 or 5 cups at a time, depending on the size of the cup.

Tip 3 — Repotting plants — When repotting plants, do not pack the dirt tight. It is better to leave the soil loose and fill in the top when needed. Tap the pot on the table or bench to settle soil and eliminate air pockets.

Tip 4 — Adequate light is most important for abundant bloom. Mild sunshine is beneficial. Remember, turn plants often if grown in window to achieve symmetry.

Tip 5 — Keep plants clean. A warm water fine spray is beneficial. Use a soft brush to remove dust and dirt particles.

Vacation Care

Mrs. J. A. W. (Ann) Richardson
RR # 1, Box 70
Tavares, Florida 32778

A beginner recently complained to me that she could not go any place any more because of her African violets. In response to my "Why?" she said, "They are so delicate, I am afraid to leave them even for a weekend." Delicate? Not at all. What other plant could one chop apart as we do our African violets and have them benefit? I maintain that African violets are really hardy plants, else why would they have survived for so many years considering all the awful things that people do to them, both good and bad? Unless you have someone who has taken care of your violets while you were away in the past, try one of these methods on your next vacation.

FOR A WEEKEND OR AS LONG AS A WEEK:

Plan 1. Just say, "Bye bye" and go, having watered them in the usual way.

Plan 2. If the house or the climate is going to be very hot, wick them. (See below.)

FOR MORE THAN A WEEK (Up to 3 weeks):
(If you are going to be gone for more than 10

days remove blossoms.)

Plan 1. Wick them. (See below)

Plan 2. For just a few plants, after watering in the usual way, put each in a plastic bag in which several holes have been punched. Devise some sort of method to keep the plastic from touching the leaves. Keep in usual location but not in sunlight.

Plan 3. For many on a stand and under lights. Cut lights to four hours a day.

(a) Wick or

(b) Water as usual and build a contraption which will surround the stand with plastic, leaving some spaces open for air. Or,

(c) Ditto, and fill troughs if you have them with water, being sure that the plants do not sit in the water.

To wick for a short time: Fill margarine tubs (or something similar) with one-quarter strength soluble fertilizer. Cut hole in cover. Cut nylon stockings crosswise, every half inch. Stretch the circles and cut once and then again into about five inch lengths. With a knitting needle or similar object push about 3" of one end of the nylon wick into the pot from the bottom and put the dangling other end into the tub at the same time placing the pot on the tub. Give the plant a drink of water. This will cause the capillary action to start and the plant will take up water from the tub while you are gone. If it dries out toward the end of your vacation, it will not matter.

Special Certificates Earned By Judges

Two AVSA lifetime judges have achieved the top echelon in National Council of State Garden Clubs judge's proficiency. Congratulations to these Master Judges: Mrs. George (Greta) McIntosh and Mrs. H. E. (Ruth) Tiedeman, both of Normal, IL.

Another AVSA lifetime judge and a judging school teacher, Mrs. W. F. (Neva) Anderson, St. Louis, MO, completed requirements for N. C. Life Certificate and also earned student judge rating in American Gloxinia and Gesneriad Society.

Miss Isla Montgomery, Denver, CO, took her reading exam to complete her courses and earned N. C. Accredited Amateur Judge's Certificate. Working together, Isla and Mrs. Ross V. (Emma) Lahr, who is an AVSA teacher, N. C. Accredited Judge and American Rose Society judge, taught the AGGS judges' training school in Denver last summer.

AVSA wishes to recognize members who have completed advanced work in judging courses for National Council or other plant societies. Please report such news to the Editor or Publications Chairman.

The Continental Approach

Joseph Hudak,
Landscape Architect
Vice-President,
Olmsted Associates, Inc.
Brookline, Massachusetts

(A condensation of remarks made at the slide presentation to the annual meeting of the African Violet Society of America, Inc., in Boston).

The history of garden development is richly detailed and magnificently presented for travelers to Europe and the British Isles. From the reconstructed atrium garden of a villa at Pompeii to the dashingly contemporary grounds of the Gulkenkian Museum in Lisbon, the range of style and scope for European landscape architecture merits close inspection.

Hundreds of years of garden grandeur often lay cheek-to-jowl in distance, providing distinctions between design eras conveniently and entertainingly. The splendor of the past often sits in relative proximity to sleek towers of today's technology, bringing together an overlap of cultural interest that is intriguing and uniquely unmatched elsewhere in the world. Continental Europe displays an amazing variety of interpretation in its landscape involvements, making it a treasure-house of captivating memories.

With so much available to gratify your horticultural focus, limiting this whirlwind tour seems inevitable from the start and thus Italy, Spain, Portugal, and the environs of London become the boundaries here. Highlighting the presentation is the amazing statuary of giant stone figures at Bomarzo, a villa just north of Rome, where fantasy winningly delights the eye while startling the imagination. Included, too, is an inspection of the Red and White palaces at Granada, Spain, the mountain hideaways of long-gone Moorish royalty, where palm trees stand silhouetted against the snow-capped Sierra Nevada mountains and water gurgles, spouts, trickles, and thunders from a host of fascinating sources supplied by the 500-year-old and original use of melted snow. The Moors were splendid engineers.

Next a tour of the novel *Estufa fria* ("cold house") of Lisbon, where flamingoes, goldfish, camellias, orchids, and towering tree ferns companionably live together outdoors without artificial heat all year long. Then on to the stunning restoration of the Renaissance-styled gardens of Blenheim Palace near London, where the gigantic scale of the whole production must be seen to be believed. More humanly scaled is Great Dixter in Kent, where billowing flower masses — as only the

English seem capable or willing to arrange — entrance the eye and soothe the spirit . . . while playful topiary delights the imagination.

Perhaps because land is at such a premium for the common folk that the European garden so often seems full to overflowing. The village garden is very often matched by the city garden in abundance of flowers, making any shun-pike travel a delight at almost every corner. Neatly trimmed Cotoneaster that knits a web of red fruit up and over a one-story English shed is quite an awesome spectacle to discover on a misty autumn afternoon, but it is hardly a rare occurrence. Europeans enjoy all kinds of horticultural adventuring.

But gardens are not made exclusively of plant materials, and the construction techniques — both old and new — continue to excite our imagination. Where the blazing sun and arid wind would have quickly battered an outdoor garden, the Spanish Moors created the walled enclosure, adding the unique covering of intricate tiles to provide permanent coloring and artistic embellishment at those times when flowering effects could not be had. The Iberian peninsula is still crowded with duplicates of this clever decorative technique.

The Portuguese went one step more and enlarged the tiles to show a chronicle of the social and historical events of the 18th and 19th centuries in presentations mounted right on the walls of their houses and public buildings. They displayed a further creativity by making attractive and intricate patterning of black basalt and grey granite for their sidewalks and public plazas. Imagination is not limited to any one country, and it is perhaps our turn to interpret anew those details so plentiful in the continental approach to designing gardens.

Humidity

To get the bloom you want on your African violets, you must provide sufficient humidity and when we say sufficient we are speaking of a humidity range of at least 50%. There are several ways to provide this amount if you do not have it — water in trays with pebbles, misting, humidifier, etc.



A Foote on the Violet Path

By Grace Foote

'Smatter with you AVSAers who write our advertisers and then don't include your addresses? Here's a note from Andy Anderson of The Greenhouse, Bellflower, CA: "To the 16 people who requested a Gro-Cart brochure before Christmas and didn't get it, sorry. You didn't include your address"... After writing all these years to Helen and Joan Van Zele at P. O. Box 843, we'll have to start learning their street addresses. Helen lives at 8302 Golden Avenue and Joan at 8306 Golden Avenue, Lemon Grove, CA., 92045. So when you're writing, send your letters to the street addresses... We're always glad to hear what our Affiliates do with the extra money they make on their plant sales. We've just learned from Emily Hodan, newly elected president of the Cleveland (Ohio) African Violet Society, that they donated \$50 to the Salvation Army and \$50 to Rosemary Macklin for the Indian Mission Reservation in New Mexico... We're mighty sorry that Fred A. Veith, longtime AVSA Commercial, has sold out his business. As he said, "Time and age have forced me to slow down." His business and Nature's Way Registration were sold to Earl Stewart of Jeffersonville, Ind., and is to be known as Earlee, Inc.... Cordelia Rienhardt, our past AVSA president, hoping all those friends who got together and donated over \$100 to the Boyce Edens Research Fund in honor of her and Harold's 50th anniversary know how much they appreciate this great honor. "We have a beautiful plaque with all their names signed on it," Cordelia said. "We shall always treasure it."... Catherine Hawley, the Ohio State Newsletter editor, had affectionately nicknamed a very dear friend, Martha Fensel, as "Gabby". When Ms. Fensel won 15 awards at the Ohio State Convention and Show, she laughingly remarked at the presentation, "Now you'll have to call me 'Grabby Gabby'".... Vera Rosene being honored by the Rockford (Ill.) African Violet Club for her faithful 24-year service to the club and fellow members — our apologies to Vera. We tagged her with another name. Dorothy Girling is the Rockford club president... Isn't it amazing how many thousands of people in the United States are vitally interested in hybridizing African violets? Time was when we left this up to professional growers. But, now we have an ever-increasing number of hybridizers. We've just learned that the Rev. Charles Blades succeeded in crossing on to 'Tommie Lou' at about the same time Harold Rienhardt did. But the Rev. Blades was in the process of changing

pastorates at the time and lost several of his seedlings. After bringing the remaining ones to maturity, he lacked the means of marketing nationally. Now the Rev. Blades is living in the Kansas City area and is continuing his hybridizing. His introductions are to be known as the "Parson's Series" and among his latest are The Parson's 'Pink Love', a pink single, and The Parson's 'Happiness', a purple double, both on 'Tommie Lou' foliage... Steven Lawson of 119 N. Allegany St., Cumberland, Md., 21502, wants us to start a small "Want Ad" column in the Magazine since he's sure, he says, "there are many people who would like to swap leaves or even sell leaves. This way there would be addresses to write to and I feel it would make many new friends through the mail." We've looked into the matter but have found that the cost for such a Want Ad would be about the same as a one-inch display ad now appearing in the Magazine... We've all been hearing lately about the food value of soybeans, but have you heard of the all-organic material, Basic H, made from soybeans, which is said to be amazingly effective against insects? It is said to contain nitrogen, adding fertilizing value to its insecticidal value. We haven't been able to learn whether or not it's recommended for African violets, but perhaps there'll be some research done on this phase since it's hailed as a near-perfect annihilator of thrips, aphids and red spider... Debbie Micari, P. O. Box 1107, Tahoe City, CA. 95730, coming up with a novel idea. She's collecting plants that have the same names as her family and is trying to obtain some leaf starts of 'Uncle Bob', 'Queen Helen', 'Melanie', 'Helen Van Zele', 'Happy Harold' and 'Tiny Ellie'... I'm delighted that our Australian AVSAers are taking on for their 1975 project the growing of seed pod and eventually producing some new plants. "Who knows", writes Mrs. J. Murphy of Hallam Rd., Hampton Park, Victoria, Australia 3976, "we may have some Australian beauties?" Mrs. Murphy's absorbing interest in violet growing began with a gift of 'Sailor Boy' and furthered by Margaret Thornton, former editor of the Australian "News and Views", who taught her all the basics in her kitchen. "The degree of my paraplegia stops me from gardening outside but in my violet room, fitted up for me by my wonderful husband, I'm able to pot and grow to my heart's delight and my disability is forgotten in the hours I spend in there," Mrs. Murphy explains.



L. LYON Beauties

(Photos by Schroeder)

CLASSY



**FROSTY
JEWEL**

Collection wiped out by mites three years in succession

Perseveres - and Wins Gold Rosette

*Mrs. Albert (Gertrude) Blouw
8869 Je Ne Be Drive
Rockford, Michigan 49341*

Don't ever say, "I never will show any of my African violets in a judged show. They are not show quality. They are not pretty enough." Just take time to groom and take nerve to enter them in a Show and you will receive the thrill of your life when your plant wins a blue ribbon!

Last year I entered three registered plants, 'Double Black Cherry', 'Pink Panther', and a miniature - 'Double Take', in our Michigan State African Violet Show for the AVSA Gold Rosette.

What a thrill to receive this Rosette! Tears of joy came to my eyes.

I have grown violets for the past 15 years, but never thought I could grow them well enough to win this special award.

As a grower, I have experienced lots of troubles, one year after another. Three years in succession my entire collection was infested with mites and I never knew how to get rid of them. I would throw them all away and start over every year.

In October of 1972, I held a Judging School at my home with Mrs. Dorothy Gray, Lifetime judge and teacher (who at that time lived in Detroit, Michigan, and is now living in Florida). My violet room was so badly infested with mites, I was very ashamed to have Mrs. Gray enter the room. In her very kind way, she suggested not to throw one plant away but be patient and I could conquer my troubles. She suggested I spray with Kelthane (1 teaspoon to 1 gallon of water) every five days.

Because of having an allergic liver condition, I can't use sprays of any kind, so this task was taken up by my dear husband, who secured a face mask and rubber gloves and started in with the Kelthane spray. He sprayed directly into the violet centers and also under the center leaves every five days. He used very tepid water and continued spraying every five days for five times and then every other week for 2 months and then once a month ever since.

I never entered the room until the next morning after my husband sprayed, and each day I could see the centers opening up. The center leaves were very deformed and curled into each other,



Mrs. Blouw in her Violet Room

and as time went on and the center leaves opened up, I would remove one or two of the deformed leaves, so the center could grow out again.

I feel mites can harbor in the plant at least three months before symptoms occur. The first sign of trouble is when the blossom is larger than usual, and has specks of different coloring or shading in the blossom. This will occur before the center shows signs of curling or snarling. Then the next set of blossoms will look distorted and show the center leaves of the plant becoming deformed. All the time the plants are placed next to each other, they are being contaminated, either by watering or touching each other. Mites are able to fly up to four feet to affect another plant. Plants are contaminated when placed with a new plant one receives as a gift or a purchase. Never place a plant in a violet collection, until after a six-week isolation.

I also feel my violet room was contaminated because of the pine bushes planted just outside the door. One can carry them on their shoes or clothing and the mites are also carried in by the breezes

through the screened doors or windows.

Now we have installed an air-conditioner in the room and we keep all other doors and windows closed, which has helped keep our Violet Room free from contamination. A steady spraying program is a necessity, ($\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of Kelthane to 1 gallon of water) once a month as a preventive.

In three months, I had new centers in all the plants and the only ones I threw away were a few plants that crown rotted, but not because of infestation.

Every morning I wanted to throw some away because the plants were so terribly deformed and made the room look awful, but my dear husband would again remind me what Dorothy Gray's instructions were, so I kept right at it. (Believe me, it was a struggle).

It took from October to the following January to get the plant centers growing out, and it was with these plants, I won my 49 ribbons, silver and cash awards, plus the AVSA Gold Rosette for the three registered plants.

Dorothy Gray and our Michigan State Society show co-ordinator, Violet Marshall of Detroit, including my dear husband, should receive all the credit for my success, and I never will find words to express my thanks for their thoughtfulness and concern in helping me out of my troubles in my Violet Room.

My Violet Room measures 20' x 20' and I grow all my plants under fluorescent lights. I have around 250 different varieties and always disbud for entering in shows. My lights are on 12 hours a day and are 14 inches above the plants. I mix my own soil. I use African Violet Fertilife, Canadian peat, vermiculite and perlite with a small amount of dehydrated cow manure added. I transplant every four to six months, whether or not the plant needs a larger pot.

Living on a lakefront, we have well water, which I cannot use successfully, because of the excessive lime in my water, so I catch rain water and in the winter time, use the lake water.

I alternate Plant Marvel, Hyponex and Rapid Grow when fertilizing. I water all plants from the top, as I have them setting on individual containers.

My humidity averages about 60 most of the day with controlled temperature of 72 to 75 degrees. At night the temperature is around 65 degrees.

Several times I have heard the remark, "I just cannot grow an African Violet." It just takes loving tender care with a lot of persistence and patience. I could have kicked the bucket several times and given up, but with all my husband's patience and encouragement, I just started over each year until he took over the spraying program as Dorothy Gray suggested. Now because of our team work, we keep our troubles under control and both of us have the satisfaction that any one



Her violets are healthy after mite infestation.

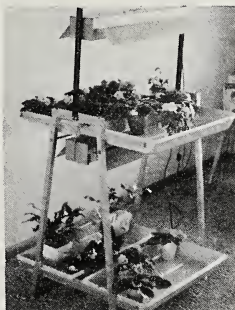
can grow these beautiful plants if one keeps on trying.

But what would we do without our dear husbands? Happy Growing!

Lumen-Liter Plant Stands are made of Gleaming Aluminum square tubing with high impact soft green trays. Lights are easily adjustable above trays with chains.



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4 Tray \$36.95

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Fixtures for above stands with 2-24" — 20 watt cool white tubes \$15.95 each with cord, plug and switch. Free sprayer included. Add 4% tax in Wisconsin.

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Miriam Steel blossoms in arrangement honoring Ohio State African Violet Newsletter. Shown and arranged by Mrs. Allen Bump, Columbus, Ohio. Photo by Larry Phillips.



ROYAL SECRET

SELECTIONS FROM
Volkmann Bros.
Greenhouses

(Photos by Grower)



ELAINE

African Violet Society of America, Inc.

ORGANIZED NOVEMBER 8, 1946 – INCORPORATED JUNE 30, 1947

"To stimulate a widespread interest in the propagation and culture of African violets everywhere"

The Board of Directors is composed of the elected officers, the directors, the immediate past president and the chairmen of standing committees.

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*By Edith Peterson,
AVSA President*

Recently we had an inquiry about the benefits of having an AVSA Life Membership. Anyone can become a Life Member by paying \$100. If you are an individual member, you will be exempt from any future dues payment. If you are a commercial member, you will be billed annually for \$9 (the difference between the regular \$15 commercial dues and the \$6 individual dues).

You will receive the African Violet Magazine and all other benefits the Society provides for life. A lovely certificate suitable for framing, signed by the AVSA President and the Treasurer, and a life membership identification card are sent you.

Life members have special seating at tables near the head table at the AVSA annual convention

banquet Friday evening. They are honored by being introduced individually at this banquet.

A warm welcome is extended our 18 new Life Members. They are: Millie Blair, Frances King and Lucille Loughlin, AVSA accredited judges; Amelia Banos, editor of Ye Bay Stater (news bulletin of Bay State AVS), and Forda Pappas, its circulation manager; Kathy Bethke, Mrs. A. W. Burg, Marjorie Dill (our first Life Member from Maine), Lois W. Giles, Mrs. John H. Harris, Mrs. Leroy E. Hultin, Mrs. Brian M. Kincaid, Irene P. Merrell, Sylvia Roszkowski, Mrs. G. E. Shelton, Mrs. David Nurenberg of London, Eng., Joy S. Williams of South Wales, Australia, and Catherine Hawley of Painesville, OH.

AVSA LIBRARY

REGULATIONS FOR USE OF AVSA LIBRARY MATERIAL

REQUEST FOR RESERVATION

Send to AVSA Library, P. O. Box 1326, Knoxville, TN 37901. Reservations will be scheduled and confirmed by this office.

Slide programs and packets are available for use by AVSA members in good standing subject to Library regulations.

SLIDE PROGRAMS

1. Make checks payable to AVSA. A \$1.50 fee is payable with request for slide programs for individual members and AVSA Affiliate Organizations. Fee to non-members is \$5.00.

2. Make request for reservation three (3) months in advance of date desired for use with the following information:

Name and address of person to whom slides will be mailed.

State exact date when material will be used.

Substitutions for requested program may be necessary. Give second and third choice of date for specific program request.

Only one (1) slide program may be reserved for a meeting. Special requests will be filled when possible. When two or more programs are requested, such requests will be filled **ONLY** if there are no other requests for the program on the same date. Affiliate Organizations requests will receive priority over individual members requests in case of a duplication because more people will benefit from the use of the program.

3. Slide programs must be returned immediately after specified meeting date in order to meet schedules for others. Please carefully repack the box for mailing.

4. Library material must be returned postpaid to the Knoxville office by first class mail. (Return postage will be the same as when posted by Knoxville.)

PACKETS

1. Program packets (written material helpful in preparing programs) are available to individual AVSA members.

2. Yearbook Collection Packets are available only to AVSA Affiliate Organizations in good standing. Yearbook Packets A, B, C, each contain approximately fourteen books representing all sections of the country.

3. Requests for two or more packets will be filled unless there is a duplicate request for the same packet.

4. Packets are loaned for a period of one month.

5. Enclose the \$1.00 fee with request to AVSA Library, P. O. Box 1326, Knoxville, TN 37901.

6. Library material must be returned postpaid to the Knoxville Office by first class mail (Return postage will be the same as when posted by Knoxville).

SLIDE PROGRAMS AVAILABLE

"A PORTRAIT OF VARIEGATED FOLIAGE" (75 slides) A look at one of the newer facets of violet growing-variegated foliage plants. Instructions on growing and a detailed description of plant in this category.

"AFRICAN VIOLETS IN ARTISTIC DESIGNS" (60 slides) A collection of arrangements and artistic plantings using a Madonna or other accessory to enhance the design or help express the mood or theme of a class. Most slides are blue ribbon winners from shows.

"ARRANGE YOUR AFRICAN VIOLETS" (59 slides) A workshop program with slides illustrating the Elements and Principles of Design and Scale of Points for judging arrangements.

"BEAUTY IS . . . THE AFRICAN VIOLET" (75 slides) Know the violet from its historical background, family, cousins, leaf patterns, blossom color, and uses in arrangements. An educational approach to the hobby.

"DESIGN FOR DOING" (62 slides) The most elementary fundamentals of arranging are featured in this program. It is especially designed for the beginner who wishes to learn to do arrangements for her own pleasure.

"FRESH FROM FRISCO" (72 slides) The AVSA Convention held in San Francisco is the subject of this study of new varieties. Introductions from many growers.

"FROM THE LAND OF SKY BLUE WATERS" (70 slides) Those new varieties presented by hybridizers at Minneapolis.

"FROM SEED TO SHOW PLANT" (49 slides) A pictorial history of one violet plant from seed to show.

"GESNERIADS ON REVIEW" (72 slides) A collection of gesneriad slides from commercial displays and prize winning plants at shows. Many of the slides were taken at the American Gloxinia and Gesneriad Convention shows.

"GROWING AND GROOMING A SHOW PLANT" (82 slides) A how-to-do-it program starting with the selection of the best leaf for propagation, showing the development and culture of a plant all of the way to packing and OFF TO THE SHOW.

"KNOW YOUR FLOWER POWER" (36 slides) Testing your knowledge of African violets can be fun with this program. Everyone will enjoy these brain teasers with their multiple choice answers.

"LIFE, LIBERTY AND THE PURSUIT OF VIOLETS" From the cradle of liberty come the new patriots of the violet world. The new commercial introductions at the Boston convention.

"MULTIPLYING SAINTPAULIAS" (65 slides) This program covers propagation by leaf cutting, division, seeds, and grafting. Slides show how to produce and plant seeds to the development of a small potted plant.

"POINTERS ON JUDGING" (60 slides) A workshop program for exhibitors and judges on judging specimen plants.

"SHOW OFF YOUR VIOLETS" (70 slides) A program showing many ways of using violets for home decoration, party favors, and table arrangements.

"TENDER LOVING CARE FOR MINIATURES" (70 slides) It is fun to work with plants that thrive on TLC. These slides will show you how to groom, grow, and show miniatures.

"THE AFRICAN VIOLET PLANT" (77 slides) Learn to identify the variety of leaf types of the violet, the diseases that affect the leaf, and the blossom colors and types with this program.

"THE GENUS SAINTPAULIA" (62 slides) A program of Saintpaulias species from Mrs. Glen Hudson's collection and species exhibited at shows. The program includes African violets from the first

registrations to the newer varieties showing the advancements in hybridization.

"THE GREAT WHITE WAY" (80 slides) The highlights of the AVSA Convention in New York City were recorded on this slide program.

"THE MOD MINIATURES" (76 slides) The second program in a series on miniature African violets. You will enjoy seeing some "oldies" and some "mods" and this should help you bridge the generation gap in miniatures.

"THE PRIDE OF PENNSYLVANIA - TINARI'S GREENHOUSES" (69 slides) Presents an outstanding view of African violets grown commercially. Featured are Tinari's introductions old and new.

"THE TREND IS MINIATURE" (80 slides) A wealth of information on growing, hybridizing and identifying the miniature and semi-miniature.

"THEATRE OF SEASONS PRESENTS VIOLETS" (80 slides) From the northland's AVSA Convention Show in Minneapolis we present a review of the highlights of that event.

"VIOLET HITS ON BROADWAY" (70 slides) The glamor girls of the new varieties introduced at the New York City Convention.

"VIOLETS AND MORE VIOLETS" (79 slides) A basic lesson for beginners showing how to set leaves, separate baby leaves from the mother leaf and divide a multiple crown plant. Also includes suggestions on potting, repotting a large plant and ways to treat a necky plant.

"VIOLETS AND SPICE AND EVERYTHING NICE" (70 slides) Connecticut known for its nutmeg spice was the state in which these new varieties were introduced. From many hybridizers - their newest.

"VIOLETS BY LAND AND BY SEA" Our beacons of beauty from the AVSA Convention show at Boston. A review of the highlights of that convention.

"VIOLETS BY THE BLUE PACIFIC" (80 slides) See the Annual AVSA Convention at San Francisco on slides. A review featuring all phases of the show.

"VIOLETS IN THE NUTMEG STATE" (75 slides) Violets galore marked this show in Connecticut. You will enjoy seeing this program.

"VIOLET TROUBLES" (63 slides) Pests, diseases and results of poor culture are discussed here. A good basic program.

"WICK WATERING" Pointers on growing wick watered African violets demonstrating wicks and reservoirs which are commercially available and adaptations of common household materials or 'throw aways'.

OTHER MATERIAL AVAILABLE

BY LAWS PACKET Rene Edmundson, the Parliamentarian for the AVSA, has presented a simple set of bylaws to be used as a guide in writing bylaws for new clubs or updating outmoded constitutions.

INSTALLATION PACKETS There are two packets with 9 Installation Ceremonies each. Each packet contains different suggested installation ceremonies which can be adapted for a Violet Club.

PROGRAM PLANNING PACKET Suggestions to help a Program Committee plan the programs for a year of club activity.

SHOW SCHEDULES PACKET Show schedules from 15 African violet shows from different sections of the country. Updated each year. Excellent for new ideas.

SOIL RECIPES AND HINTS ON GROWING PACKET This packet contains a selection of soil recipes from AVSA members in different parts of the country. Also included are helpful hints in growing the violet.

YEARBOOK COLLECTION PACKETS There are three packets of 14 yearbooks each. Each packet contains one of the top prize winners at the last AVSA Convention competition.

Plant Lover Does Like Violets Best

*Mrs. Evelyn Aceituno
2128 Regis Drive
Davis, CA 95616*

I have been a plant person for many years. It all started with a Girl Scout project. We had to keep a Swedish Ivy cutting alive for one month. That was 15 years ago, and I still have several pots of it!

I received my first African violet in 1968. I took no special interest in it until it bloomed again (by chance it had ended up next to a north window). Then it became a challenge to see if I could get others to grow and bloom. We always had limited space, so when I discovered minis in 1973 they became my main interest.

Although I'm still relatively inexperienced in growing African violets, I have a good general plant background from classes and lots of reading. I enjoy reading about other people's methods and thought you might find mine helpful.

Here in the Sacramento Valley we have several problems — dry climate, very hot summers, and hard (high salinity) water. So far, open jars of water among my plants have given adequate humidity. During the summer, frequent watering is a must. One way to tell if a plant needs water is by its weight. Pick up your plants before and after watering... they are noticeably heavier afterwards. In a short time you will know when they need water just by lifting them.

Hard water is an interesting problem. I've even heard horticulture professors claim you can't grow houseplants using our tap water. I guess my violets

don't know that rule, since they are robust and full of blooms! I do always water from the top until water runs out the bottom. This helps keep the salts from building up in the pot. Pot rims do occasionally need to be rubbed free of salt build-up to prevent leaf injury. I have the usual gallon of fertilizer solution ($\frac{1}{4}$ strength), but I only fill my watering can half full and then add warm tap water — soil absorbs warm water more readily. I also use the 3M Co.'s Precise plant food ($\frac{1}{4}$ dose) since my watering solution is weaker than most.

Clean margarine containers are good as saucers, or fill with sand for individual humidity trays or vermiculite to root several leaves. Soft drink bottle caps can be used to cover drainage holes when you are repotting. Numbered pieces of masking tape are a good way to label leaves. Make a list and give a number to each variety and put the same number on the leaves you are rooting. Small, sharp pointed embroidery scissors are good for removing suckers or grooming plants.

I am looking for sources for minis (plants or leaves), particularly near the west coast.

I would appreciate any suggestions.

There has been such a great increase in the number of plants I see in homes that I'm sure many more people will turn to violets. They can't be too difficult if they grow well here! Violets even like the same temperatures people do! What other plant comes in so many varieties, blooms year round, and looks good alone or in a group... definitely the perfect houseplant!

Barbara Cook Is Top Winner . . .

AVSA Show Ablaze With Colorful Prize Winning African Violets

There were a lot of happy winners at the Boston AVSA Convention and Show — and maybe, there was a wee bit of envy, too, for not being able to grow such sparkling beauties as were displayed by growers from all areas of the country.

As usual there were some BIG winners — and there were some small winners. But many, many congratulations were in order for all those who entered plants. They were truly a riot of color! The big Georgian Ballroom was not only ablaze with huge glistening crystal chandeliers but it was ablaze, too, with splendor and beauty in the individual plants, the terrariums, beautiful gloxinias, episcias and other gesneriads, the designs and arrangements and even the species.

Barbara Cook of Falmouth, MA, swept the board with 21 awards, included among which were the AVSA Silver Cup for 'Lavender Delight', the best registered variety in the Amateur division; the Purple Rosette for the AVSA Collection of three different registered varieties, 'Eternal Snow', 'Blue Fashionaire' and 'Lavender Delight'; and the Joan Van Zele Award of \$25 and a trophy for the same collection.

Her other awards and winning violets were as follows: Stim-U-Plant Laboratories, Inc., Award of \$50 and a plaque for 'Lavender Delight'; Mr. and Mrs. Frank Burton Award of \$25 for 'Ablaze'; Granger Gardens Award of \$25 for 'Miriam Steel'; Friendly AV Club Award of \$15 with 'Lavender Delight'; June Butler Award of \$10 with 'Eternal Snow'; AVS of San Francisco Award of \$10 with 'Purple Gold'; AVSA Honorable Mention Rosette and \$10 cash with 'Blue Fashionaire'; Helene Hibbard Award of \$10 with 'Artist Dream'; Jimmy Watson Award of \$10 with 'Purple Gold'; Windsor AVS Award of \$10 with 'Creekside Moonbeam'; Ethel James Award of \$5 with 'Garnet Elf Sport'; Mrs. E. R. Davis Award of \$5 with 'Starshine'; Rienhardt AV trophy for 'Cordelia'; Mrs. Jessie Crisafulli Award of \$5 with 'Cordelia'; Bay State Judges Council China tea set award with 'Blue Fashionaire'.

Mrs. Cook also received the New York City AVS trophy for sweepstakes in the horticulture classes with 36 blue ribbons; the AV Council of Southern California Award of \$10 with Columnea Early Bird and the Helen Von Gink Holland spoon with Sinningia Tinker Bells.

Raymond Dooley of Staten Island, NY, came in

second with 11 awards. His winning plants and awards were as follows:

'Pink Rhapsody', Moby Dick AVC Award of \$25 and Lizeta Hamilton Award of \$10; 'Richter's Wedgewood', Northern California Council of AVS Award of \$25; 'Dazzle', AVS of Philadelphia Award of \$10; 'Mary C', AV Study Club of Birmingham Award of \$10; 'Shalemar', North Shore AVS Award of \$10; 'Coralie', Bay State AVS Award of \$25; 'Becky', Pioneer Valley AVS Award \$10; 'Pinks-a-Poppin', Ann Richardson Award of \$10; the Percy F. Crane Award of \$20 for second highest number of blue ribbons — 25 in number; and the Mrs. Edward A. Nelson Award of \$5 for second best entry in the design division with "One If by Land, Two If by Sea".

Frances Buschnagel of Tewksbury, MA, scored high with her eight entries in the arrangements and design division and received the Metropolitan St. Louis AVS Award of \$15 for winning sweepstakes in the Design Division. Her other entries and awards were as follows: "Cosmic Fantasy", AV Council of Southern California Award of \$10 and the Patriots Chapter Award of \$10; "Two by Sea", Patriots Chapter Award of \$10; "On Guard", Elizabeth Barclay Award of \$10; "Granite", Union County Chapter of the AVSA silver award and Santa Monica Bay Chapter of AVSA Award of \$5; and "Hatch Memorial Shell — Pop Concert", Marie Shamblin Award of \$5.

Kurt Faulhammer of Centredale, RI, won three awards with Granger's 'Blue Flair'. They were the Stim-U-Plant Laboratories, Inc., Award of \$25 and a plaque, Edith Peterson — President's Trophy, and the Society Award of Merit and \$15. His other winning violets and awards were: 'Pink Flair', the John and Mabel Gutridge Award of \$10; 'Pink Philly', the Tinari Silver Trophy; Westwinds' 'Red Queen Sport', the Fonda F. Pappas Award of \$10, and 'Purple Choice', Herbert Hughes Award of \$10.

The TubeCraft FloraCart, model BA3 complete, was won by Elizabeth Behnke of Newark, DE with her best AVSA Collection of Richter's 'Wedgewood', 'T-V Stag Line' and 'Fanfare'. Her other winning plants and awards were: 'Happy Harold', Reinhardt Trophy; 'Kay A', Grace Gillespie Award of \$10; and 'Fire Dance', Anthony Crisafulli Award of \$5.

Bro. Blaise of Harrisville, RI, took the Wisconsin Council of AVC Award of \$15 for his 22 blue

ribbons. He also won the Helen Van Zele Award of \$10 with 'Starshine', the Indianapolis AVC Award of \$10 with his seedling, 'Magnificence', and the Joy Upton Award of \$5 with 'Pink Philly'.

Jessie Crusafulli of Belchertown, MA, was winner of the Stim-U-Plant Laboratories, Inc., Award of \$25 and a plaque for 'White Crown'; the Bergen County AVS Award with 'Bergen Strawberry Shortcake', the Mabel and Glenn Hudson silver award with S. Pendula var. Kizarae, and the Helen Van Gink Holland spoon for S. Cindy.

Mrs. Warren Churchill of Rockport, ME, took the Santa Monica Bay Chapter of the AVSA Award of \$10 and the Marie and Stanley Leshner Award of \$10 with her artistic planting, "Cranberry Bog"; and also won the Mrs. Frank Barton china award and the Indianapolis AVC Award of \$10 with her semi-miniature, 'Lavender Elfin Girl.'

Nancy Hayes of Bloomfield, CT, won the Indianapolis AVS Award of \$10 for her entry, 'Spring Beauty', and the Camille Maxwell Award of \$5 for "The Boston Tea Party" in the Design Division. She also captured the Marie and Stanley Leshner Award of \$10 for her arrangement, "Copley Square"; and the Wisconsin Council of AVC Award of \$10 for the highest number of blue ribbons, classes 30 through 40.

Mrs. Joseph Trost received the Mildred Schroeder Award of \$5 for her seedling, 'Amateur'; the Rhode Island AVS Award of \$10 for 'R. Mars', and the Amy Sonka Award of \$5 for 'Ballet Heidi.'

"Copley Square", an arrangement, won Mrs. Lyle J. Courage of Wakefield, MA, two awards. They were the Merrimack Valley AVS Award of a china bell and the Santa Monica Bay Chapter of AVSA Award of \$5.

Winner of the Stim-U-Plant Laboratories, Inc., Award of \$25 and a plaque was Rowell Yerman of Rome, NY, who also won the Belle Steven Award of \$5 with 'Big Mack'.

Jeannette Achauer of Milwaukee, WI won the Mrs. W. F. Anderson Award of \$10 for her entry, "Hatch Memorial Shell - Pop Concert", in the design division and Jeannine Achauer took the Cynthia Ford Award of \$5 for her entry, "Spring Beauty" in the same division.

'Royal Trinket' won the Dora Baker Award of \$10 for Jean Johnson, who also received the Indianapolis AVC Award of \$10 for 'Canoe', the second best specimen plant in unusual, decorative or novel container.

Martin D. Miller received the Granger Gardens Award of \$25 for 'Fashionaire' and the St. Louis Judges Council Award of \$15 for 'Midget Bon Bon'.

A terrarium, "Violet Walk", won two awards for Elaine Gordon of Elgin, IL. They were the Indianapolis AVS Award of \$10 and the Mrs. Mary

S. Garrity Revere plate award.

Other winning plants, awards and winners were as follows:

Ruth Carey', Tinari Greenhouses silver trophy, Mabel Hudson of Westfield, NJ; Nematunthus Wettsteinii, Mrs. Percy F. Crane Award of \$15, John Montague of Belmont, MA; 'Cradle Song', Amy Lackner Award of \$10, Ellie Bogin; 'Peak of Pink', Trimount AVS Award of \$10, Mary Kosik; 'Pink Pique', Mrs. Carlene Johnston and Mrs. Alice Florentine Freedom Plate Award, Joan Chase of South Wareham, MA; 'Little Red', Carl and Barbara Clark Award, Mrs. Suzette Smith of Valley Stream, NY.

Amelia P. Banos of Boston won the Betty Weekes Award of \$10 for her entry, "The Boston Tea Party" in the Design Division.

For the best promotional exhibit, Howard O. Burns of Greenfield, WI, won the Adeline Krogman Award of \$10.

The Herbert Warner Award of \$20 for the best educational exhibit fell to Mrs. Carl E. Clark of West Hartford, CT.

Recognition Given Magazine Articles

Five contributors of articles for The African Violet Magazine during the past year received special Certificates of Appreciation at the AVSA convention and show in Boston. The articles were selected by the Publications Committee, headed by Neva Anderson.

The Certificates of Appreciation went to the following:

Emory Leland, 7014 29th Avenue, N.E., Seattle, WA 98115 for his article, "Understand and Use pH to Grow Better African Violets," which appeared in the November 1974 magazine.

Dr. Margaret Stone, Senior Curator at the L. H. Bailey Hortorium at Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, for her presentation and pictures on "Saint-paulia Species."

Dr. Dennis M. Dunbar, entomologist, Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, New Haven, CT, for his discussion of "Pesticide Legislation and Pests Affecting African Violet Culture."

Mrs. C. W. (Wilda) Beattie, 283 Churchill Drive, Winnipeg, Man. Canada R3L 1V7, for her experience with a "Girl" violet, which she entitled, "Congratulations, You Have Another Girl."

Mrs. Edward T. (Pauline) Bartholomew, 172 W. Elfin Green, Port Hueneme, CA 93041, for her description of a convention trip, entitled "A Terrarium Goes To Convention."

Adele Tretter Awarded Honorary Life Membership

Adele Tretter, who is in charge of the registration of all African violets, was signally honored by the African Violet Society of America, Inc., at the Boston AVSA convention and Show.

Mrs. Tretter, who is the wife of Fred Tretter of St. Louis, MO, was the recipient of AVSA's 1975 Honorary Life Membership.

An AVSA member for a number of years, Mrs. Tretter has received wide acclaim from AVSA growers and individual members for her work in

officially registering African violets. She is ably assisted in this work by her husband, who is vice chairman of the AVSA Plant Registration committee.

Mrs. Tretter also works with Frank Burton, chairman of the International Code of Nomenclature for Cultivated Plants. AVSA is the official Saintpaulia registrar.

This outstanding service to AVSA was officially recognized when she was awarded the Honorary Life Membership.

New Introductions Shown At Boston AVSA Convention

Lyndon Lyon's three new introductions at the Boston AVSA convention and show won for him the AVSA Best New Introduction Award and the two Joan Van Zele Awards. The new introductions were 'Christi Love', a new coral; 'Winter's Dream' and 'Wild Country'.

Jean Dolan of Stony Creek, operator of The Violet House, was winner of the Winfred Albright Memorial Award for best seedling, 'Winter Grape' and the Helen Van Zele Award for second best seedling, 'Velvet Ribbons'.

Granger's captured the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society award for winning 25 blue ribbons with specimen plants on the display table and also received the New York State Society Award for horticultural perfection.

The Los Angeles AV Society Awards for second best horticultural perfection went to Lyndon Lyon and third best to Tinari Greenhouses.

Jean Dolan was also winner of the Helene Galpin Memorial Award for her sweepstakes of 10

blue ribbons.

Awards were presented as follows for best commercial display tables: First, Lyndon Lyon; second, Granger's; third, Tinari's and fourth, Buell's Greenhouses.

Champion's of Clay, NY, captured the Commercial Silver Cup awarded to 'Garnet Elf,' the best registered named variety in the commercial division.

10 AVSA Members Get Recognition

Three AVSA members were officially recognized at the Boston AVSA Convention for their continuing service to AVSA. In appreciation for their work and as a mark of appreciation, AVSA Continuing Service Awards were presented to Lizeta Tenney Hamilton, Affiliate chairman for many years and now AVSA secretary; Mrs. Clarice Bell, AVSA office manager at Knoxville, TN, and Mrs. J. A. W. Richardson of Tavares, FL, longtime AVSA member and now magazine columnist, who writes "Beginner's Column".

Seven other AVSA members received one-year Honorary AVSA Memberships. These were Mrs. Stanley J. Trasker of Haddock, CT, Mrs. Warren Churchill of Rockport, ME, Mrs. Daniel Dohm, Jr., of St. Louis, MO, Mrs. D. F. Francis of Chesterfield, MO, Edgar Varick of Milford, CT, Glenn B. Hudson of Westfield, NJ, and Mrs. R. A. Chase of Redwood City, CA.

Millie Blair Receives Award

Mrs. Edward Blair of Vallejo, CA, was awarded the Ruth Carey Award for Affiliate Leadership at the Boston AVSA convention and show.

Mrs. Blair, affectionally known to AVSAers as Millie, received the silver award for outstanding leadership in promoting all phases of affiliates' activities in accordance with AVSA objectives.

Columneas

Mrs. Warren F. Cressy, Jr.
Dugway Road
Falls Village, CT 06031

(This is the first of a series of articles on some gesneriads, "kissin' cousins" of African violets).

African violets deserve every word of praise they have received. It would never occur to me to try to persuade anyone to replace them with another plant. However, some of the other gesneriads are so fascinating to know and grow that many people are becoming more interested in trying them. They range in size from the tiny *sinningias* that can be grown in a thimble sized pot to huge specimens suitable only for a greenhouse or their natural habitat.

We are extremely fortunate to have available a book which presents a detailed study of gesneriads, giving information that is easy for the beginning hobbyist to understand as well as technical data for the botanist. The pronouncing index is of enormous value, as you can imagine if you have ever stumbled your way through some of the names. Many of you no doubt are familiar with the book: "African Violets, Gloxinias and Their Relatives," by Harold F. Moore, Jr., 1957 Macmillan Company. Since this book was written of course much has been learned about the culture of gesneriads as house plants, and many new hybrids have appeared. Some plants have been reclassified, so we have to accustom ourselves to the fact, for example, that the one we know as *reichsteineria* is now a *sinningia*. But for the person who is interested in origins, accurate descriptions and how the plants grow in the wild and in cultivation, it is indispensable. Now what we need is a book by Frances N. Batcheller, a book written as only she could do on culture under average house conditions.

My first introduction to *columneas* was at the International Flower Show about 15 years ago. Someone with imagination had arranged a small terrace, using in one corner a beautifully grown *C. hirta* in a hanging pot. The plant was covered with brilliant orange flowers. Naturally I bought a small plant as soon as possible, but it was quite a long time before mine at all resembled the show plant. I had to learn the hard way: that not all *columneas* like the same treatment. *C. hirta* is in my opinion a choice plant and wonderful seasonal bloomer, when given proper care, but not the best one for a beginner to try. You have all heard someone complain that her Christmas cactus refuses to bloom

while someone else always has showers of flowers. *C. hirta* likes much the same treatment, chilly temperatures and/or short days before setting buds. Mine was so pampered at first that it was only a lovely foliage plant. Now it hangs in a cool west window in a room unlighted at night, begins setting buds before Christmas and can be counted on for a good display during fully two months, about mid-January until mid-March. Branches tend to curl down, up, sideways, so the pot is hidden by a mass of flowers and leaves.

Some growers prefer seasonal performers, others like everblooms. The once a year plants put on a truly spectacular show, with brilliant flowers all up and down the stems. Some of the everblooms, on the other hand, can be counted on, with careful care, to give a good display most of the time.

Choosing one's first *columnea* can be difficult. At a Show or in a good commercial greenhouse they may all look beautiful, well shaped and covered with flowers. But how were they brought to such perfection? Can you duplicate the treatment they were given? Do you want one big burst of bloom for a month or two, or do you want constant bloom? After several years of growing as many different *columneas* as possible, it seems to me that two are outstandingly good for beginning choices, Early Bird and Chanticleer. Both are readily available now, offered by several commercial greenhouses. Both are reliable everblooms with tolerance for various methods of treatment.

C. Early Bird has orange-red flowers with yellow at the base. Leaves are small and pointed, closely set and waxy. Since stems trail straight down and a well grown plant sends out many runners from the base, it is a good choice for hanging in a well lighted window. Mine are in both east and west windows where they also receive some south sun. However, in the summer they have flickering shade from deciduous trees. That room used to become too hot and sunny, so we planted a Moraine Locust on the west a little distance away. Now the small locust leaves give enough shade without cutting off too much light. Strong hot sunshine needs to be filtered or *columnea* leaves bleach.



BEAUTIES? - - Here are some gesneriads grown by Mrs. Warren F. Cressy, Jr., of Falls Village, Conn., in a small corner of her sun room (top photo). More of these lovely plants are grown in a light cabinet with *C. Chanticleer* on the shelf near the top. (lower photo).



C. Chanticleer does far better for me under fluorescent lights than in a window. On a lighted shelf, the soft light green leaves grow closely together and flowers appear abundantly all year, yellow base tipped with orange. Since this is a semi-trailing variety it can be easily pruned into a good compact shape, much more suitable for a shelf than trailing varieties are. The tops of my *Chanticleers* are only about 5" below the tube. There have been many discussions among growers about the best kind of fluorescent tube to use. My preference is for Gro-lux, but the one you like is the best one for you to use. My *Chanticleers* are happy with eleven to twelve hours of light a day. The lights for one shelf of them have been decreased this year to seven or eight hours. They bloom but not as well and leaves are more widely spaced.

Most of the trailing varieties are difficult to handle in the usual light set-ups because they must be constantly cut back to fit the space, thus losing much of their gracefulness. They are sometimes allowed to trail from a top shelf, or are placed on upturned pots. Young plants look attractive when set into stemmed goblets. Even so they cannot attain full beauty without more space.

C. Mary Ann is a popular choice for light gardens, although mine do not rival *Chanticleer* on the shelves. Deep rose-red flowers, very dark foliage, spreading, semi-trailing, always in bloom and easy. As you look through growers' lists, you will see several that are described as "compact", "semi-trailing", - - - all are worth trying. There are even a few "upright" but those I have tried did not appeal to me and were soon discarded.

Hybridizers have been trying to develop real miniatures and a few have appeared on the market. For me they have been weak growers with little bloom. However, right now two look promising, *Wee Birdie* and *Fire Crest*. Both are bushy little mounds of dark green that sprawl just enough to cover their pots. Unfortunately I let mine go through a period of neglect so it will take a little longer to see if the amount of bloom comes up to my hopes. These two are apparently not yet widely available, probably listed only in the far west.

We have a much wider choice in good trailers, and for anyone with enough space they are great fun to grow. My unshakeable favorite is *C. arguta*, a species from Panama. In a greenhouse the stems reach down several feet and when those gorgeous red flowers appear nothing can surpass it. Mine cannot be allowed to reach so far and, quite honestly, I cannot always count on having it bloom. When it has had exactly the treatment it likes, it blooms from before Thanksgiving through Christmas and well into January. The treatment it likes? From my experience it appears to bloom on mature stems, likes a dryer than usual July and then

light feeding after stingy waterings. My guesses could be wrong but that seems to work for me.

C. Joy, which has rather similar foliage and the same shape, but smaller, flowers, is a more or less everbloomer and has become quite popular. For several years, Yellow Dragon and Goldie have been well liked and easy. Multiflora and Gold Rush are excellent. Yellow Hammer is a new very fine one with long lasting light yellow flowers showing no trace of red. As you may realize by now, most of them please me. Good dealers' lists give clear descriptions and can be relied upon so it is safe to choose any that appeal to you.

Most dealers send out small plants in 2" or 3" plastic pots, wonderfully packed, with instructions enclosed. When a plant has become sufficiently acclimated and you decide to repot, you may wonder what kind of pot to use and what soil mix. In the sun room I prefer clay pots because they look better with the pine paneling. In the fluorescent light cabinets, which are painted white inside, white plastic pots are less conspicuous. However, there are times when a not very symmetrical *columnnea* is inclined to tip over a plastic pot. Either does fine and we all have our own preferences.

As experienced African violet growers each of you has a favorite soil mix and knows exactly how much water and fertilizer to use. It is wise to use a mix with which you are familiar because some growers like the constant feed method, others use long lasting fertilizers, and the various potting mixes vary a great deal. The one point to remember is that *columnneas* need a very light porous mix with excellent drainage. In the wild many are epiphytes in moist forested areas, so it is reasonable to conclude that they like frequent showers and well drained fluffy mixtures around their roots.

My advice is to go a little easy with fertilizer. Very light frequent applications seem to work best, but seasonal bloomers should be allowed to rest before they are due to set buds. The same advice applies to water. Sometimes we are told to allow a plant to dry out thoroughly, then water thoroughly. My *columnneas* do better when the fine roots are never either really soaked or extremely dry. Most of them bloom better when slightly pot bound. When the pot contains a real mass of roots, very light but frequent waterings work well. In the wild they probably have small showers at almost daily intervals. Three older plants in 8" pots have fine roots right at the soil surface. These need to be top-moistened especially often.

Columnneas love high humidity. If you can take them to the kitchen sink frequently for a spray of warm water you will see their appreciation. A

spray with a small mister full of hot water helps too. That treatment cannot be overemphasized.

(To Be Continued)

Kolbs Awarded Bronze Medal

Always an event of much interest at every AVSA convention is the awarding of the Bronze Medal Certificate for Horticultural Achievement.

The Bronze Medal is one of AVSA's most honored and most distinguished awards, presented annually at each AVSA Convention and Show.

The 1975 Bronze Medal went to Mr. and Mrs. Earl Kolb of Kolb's Greenhouses in Phillipsburg, NJ, in recognition of their skill and effort, which have resulted in the many fine Saintpaulia varieties and their faithful support of AVSA.

Four Yearbooks Receive Awards

Yearbook awards were received by four AVSA Affiliates at the Boston AVSA Convention and Show. The colorful display of yearbooks in the beautiful ballroom where the show was held attracted the attention of many AVSAers and guests attending the show.

First prize went to the Crosstown AVC of Madison, WI, Mrs. Frances Olsen, president.

The second award fell to the Columbus AVS of Columbus, OH, Mrs. Thelma Wilcox, president; the third to AVS of Lower Bucks County of Levittown, PA, Mrs. Blaise Capriotti, president; and the fourth to the AVS of Springfield, Del. Co., of Springfield, PA, Mrs. Howard Rieger, president.

LIST CHAIRMEN OF CONVENTIONS

Chairman of the 1976 AVSA Convention to be held in Atlanta, GA, will be Mrs. J. A. W. (Ann) Richardson of Tavares, FL. Her vice chairman will be Mrs. R. M. (Emergene) Pyle, Jr., of Pensacola, FL, and the show chairman will be Mrs. Frank (Chris) Huebscher of Panama City, FL.

The Dixie African Violet Society will serve as host at the Atlanta Convention.

The 1977 convention to be held in St. Louis, MO, will be chairmanned by Mrs. Daniel Dohm, Jr., with Mrs. Dana R. Gipson as vice chairman and Mrs. Jane M. Francis as show chairman.

Silver Bowls Go To Winners

Four silver bowls were awarded at the Boston AVSA Convention and Show as AVSA Sweepstakes Awards. The awards went to four AVSA members who won the most blue ribbons in specimen classes in shows sponsored by Affiliates last year.

Winners were Mrs. William Leppard with 112 blue ribbons; Raymond Dooley with 108 blue ribbons; Mrs. Elmer Lusk with 60 blue ribbons; and Mrs. George Ilstrup with 47 blue ribbons.

PRIZES TAKEN HOME BY AVSA MEMBERS

In addition to the door prizes given to all convention registrants, conventiongoers were also given opportunity to try their luck at some other prizes, arranged for by the convention hosts.

Winners of these prizes were as follows: Afghan, Marie Montague of Bellmont, MS; historic plate, John Cook of Falmouth, MA; light, Laetta Cutchley of Forestville, CT; shell picture set, Elizabeth Barclay of Pacific Palisades, CA; and a Green Book, Miriam Jones of Saxonville, MS.

PLANNING TO ENTER YEARBOOK?

If you're planning to enter your 1975-76 yearbook in competition at the 1976 AVSA Convention in Atlanta, Georgia, then be sure to refer to the new scale of points, which can be found in Ruth Carey's 1975 Revised "Judges and Exhibitors Handbook", now available.

LAZY SUSAN FOR AFRICAN VIOLETS

An ardent grower of African violets, Mrs. Marvin Middleton of Rt. 3, Chatsworth, Ga., was the designer of an original Lazy Susan for her plants. Now several designs in size and number of tiers are being manufactured by Bert Sampler of Chatsworth in his log cabin workshop.

The Lazy Susans are made with red oak foundation stock with birch discs or two tiers of solid oak. They are available in light oak, Spanish walnut or mahogany stains.

The tables rotate on a 6" high density polyethylene and oakwood bearing and shaft assembly. And the nice thing about these bearings is that they are for sale separately for do-it-yourself home workshops.

ATTENTION... LIFETIME JUDGES

Answers to all questions for the lifetime judges' examination will be found in the revised (1975) Judges and Exhibitors Handbook, which is now available from Mrs. James B. Carey, 3900 Garden Drive, Knoxville, TN 37918.

Planting by the Moon

By Em Hunt
4648 Fourth Avenue
Ontario, Canada L2E 4N7

June — 1975

Fruitful - 1-2-3-11-12-20-21-28-29-30

Semi-fruitful - 6-7-17-18-19-24-25

4th Qtr. June 1st/75

1st Qtr. June 9th/75

July — 1975

Fruitful - 8-9-16-17-18-26-27

Semi-fruitful - 3-4-5-14-15-21-22-31

4th Qtr. July 1st/75

1st Qtr. July 9th/75

August — 1975

Fruitful - 4-5-6-13-14-21-22-23-24

Semi-fruitful - 1-10-11-12-17-18-27-28-29

4th Qtr. July 31st/75

1st Qtr. August 7th/75

September — 1975

Fruitful - 1-9-10-18-19-20-28-29

Semi-fruitful - 7-8-13-14-15-23-24-25

4th Qtr. August 29th/75

1st Qtr. September 5th/75

October — 1975

Fruitful - 6-7-15-16-17-25-26-27

Semi-fruitful - 4-5-11-12-20-21

4th Qtr. September 28th/75

1st Qtr. October 5th/75

November — 1975

Fruitful - 3-4-12-13-22-23-30

Semi-fruitful - 1-2-7-8-17-18-28-29

4th Qtr. October 27th/75

1st Qtr. November 4th/75

December — 1975

Fruitful - 1-9-10-19-20-27-28-29

Semi-fruitful - 4-5-6-14-15

4th Qtr. November 26th/75

1st Qtr. December 3rd/75

* ROOTED CUTTINGS *

Acadian, After Dark, Agnew, Alakazam, Aloha Blue, Angela Rose, Angel Child, Angora, Anna Marie, Ann Slocum, American Vigor, Amethyst, April Lilac, Aquarius, Artic Mist, Astrolot, Astro Pink, Astro Purple, Astro Orchid, Astro Rainbow, Athena, Autumn Russet, Avalon Blue, Azure Skies, Ballerina, Bandwagon, Bambino, Barette, Batman, Beau Prince, Becky, Bee Bee, Bettina, Betty Nelson, Betty Stoehr, Big Chance, Blackberry Fluff, Black Cherry, Blackfoot, Bloomin Fool, Blue Abundance, Blue Boy, Blue Cushion, Blue Fairy Tale, Blue Flair, Blue Fandango, Blue Modiste, Blue Monarch, Blue Nocturne, Blue Reverie, Blue Skies, Blushing Rosette, Blue Storm, Bonus Babe, Bluzette, Brenda, Brigadoon, Broadripple, Bubblin Over, Buccaneer, Bull's Eye, Butterfly White, Calico Lass, Calument Beacon, Candy Lips, Camille, Caravan Queen, Carefree, Carnival Queen, Captivation, Carousel, Cashmere Pink, Cashmere Rose, Cathy Anshultz, Cerise Enchantment, Chanticleer, Charlie, Charmer, Charmglow, Charmsong, Cherokee Rose, Cherry Tart, Chipper, Chochie, Christmas Holly, Clarissa Harris, Colorado Cornation, Constance Hansen, Copper Tips, Coralie, Coral Beauty, Coral Crest, Coral Flame, Coral Pink, Coral Reef, Coronet, Count Down, Cranberry, Craze, Creekside Moonbeam, Crimson Charm, Crown of Gold, Crusader Supreme, Dancer, Darcie, Dark Giant, Delft Imperial, Delft Rosette, Desert Rose, Devonshire, Dorothy Gray, Dotty Blue, Dotty Red, Dbl. Appleblossom, Dbl. Clarissa Harris, Dbl. Orchid, Dbl. Velvet Girl, Dream, Duke, Early Morn, Egyptian Target, Electra, Elisa Frew, El Toro, Emerald Pink, Estroda, Exotic, Exposition, Eyecatcher, Fairy Swirls, Farmer's Daughter, Fashionaire, Festival, Fire Bird, Fire Hazard, Flamingo, Fleet Dream, Fran, Fringe Nosegay, Fringed Pom Pom, Friendship, Fringed Lilac, Frosted Blue, Futuristic, Gaiety, Garnet Elf, Garnet Flame, Giant Blue Crest, Giant Butterfly, Ginger Blue, Ginger Peachie, Glimmer, Glowing, Go Light, Governor Wallace, Great Find, Great White Way, Green Blush, Green Dawn, Green Ice, Green Sleeves, Gretchin, Gum Drop, Gypsy, Half Time, Hand Painted, Hand Picked, Handkerchief, Hanky Panky, Happy Harold, Happy Time, Harvest Time, Heart of Dixie, Henny Backus, Hidden Treasure, Highland Beau, Highlight, Hi Lovely, Hill Country, Holly Peach, Hubert Hodge, Icy Peach, Inca Chief, Imperial Brocade, Ionantha, Irish Dude, Ivory Coast, Ivory Fashion, Ivory Cloud, Janny, Jaybird, Jazzberry, Jeanne, Jennifer Star, Jennifer, Jingle Bells, Jolly Giant, Juliana, June Bouquet, Jungle Fire, Kansas City Royal, Kathleen, Kay-A, Labelle Ladies Aide, Lady Ship, Lavender Fiesta, Lavender Fluff, Leslie, Like Wow, Like Wow Sport, Lilac Morn, Little Darling, Lucy Maynard, Lullaby, Lullaby Spt., Madam Woo, Maid Marion, Majestic, Margo, Maroon Frost, Mary-D, Meagan, Merry Pink, Midnight Serenade, Ming Treasure, Mirandy, Miriam Steele, Mr. President, Miss North Carolina, Miss Texas, Mock Rose, Modern Jewel, Moon Crest, Moon Drops, More Fury, More So, Mosaic Peach, Mosaic Rose, Mulberry Fluff, Musetta, My Blue Heaven, Nancy Reagan, New Moon, Nightshade, Northern Prize, Oh Joy, Orchid Clusters, Orchid Smoke, Orion, Opera Star, Painted Beauty, Painted Orchid, Pansy Image, Paul Bunyan, Peach Frost, Peak of Pink, Pedro Penguin, Peppermint, Perfection Blue, Persian Glory, Persian Sunrise, Persian Swirl, Pied Piper, Pink A Ling, Ping Agnew, Pink Carnival, Pink Carnation, Pink Confection, Pink Crepe, Pink Coquette, Pink Flair, Pink Heritage, Pink Madelion, Pink Nocturne, Pink Panther, Pink Plicata, Pink Porcelain, Pink Premier, Pink Reverie, Pink Ripple, Pink Swan, Pink Valentine, Pink Velvet, Pinks A Poppin, Pizzaz, Platinum, Plum Glisten, Pom Pom, Polar Queen, Pocono Mountain, Pom Pom Witch, Poodle Top, Pretender, Puddin, Purple Bliss, Purple Enchantment, Purple Knight, Purple Popcorn, Purple Regent, Purple Tempo, Purrr Pink, Quiet Waters, Ralph Reed, Ralph Fletcher, Raspberry Star, Rebecca, Red Anita, Red Cavalier, Red Cloud, Red Dandy, Red Flair, Red Honey, Red Premier, Red Rogue, Red Trinket, Red Wax, Red Witch, Risque, Robert O. Rose Dusk, Rose Frost, Rose Nugget, Rosette, Rosey Frills, Royal Elegance, Royal Knight, Ruby, Ruby Glow, Sailor's Delight, Sailor's Dream, Satan Song, Satellite Frills, Seafoam, See Queen, Sea Spun, Serenada, Shag, Shangri La Prince, Shawnee, Sheba, Silver Celebration, Silver Crest, Silver Jubilee, Silver Pinafore, Silver Threads, Singing Surf, Sir Anthony, Six Pack, Smile, Smuggler's Notch, Snow, Snow's of Kilamangaro, Softique, Sparkled Star, Sparky, Spanish Geranium, Spring Deb, Spring Fever, Stained Glass, Stampede, Star Gazer, Star Spray, Staliner, Step Up, Storm King, Strawberry Parfait, Strawberry Shortcake, Sudden Spring, Sugar Plum Fairy, Sultry Purple, Sultry Rose, Sunday, Superba, Suzy's Mr. Lucky, Swagger, Sweet Anna, Sweet Pixie, Swiss Ballet, Tammy, Tiffany, Thriller, Tinted Ruffles, Tinted Frills, Tipt, Tommie Lou, Top Sail, Touche, Trifari, Triple Threat, Tula, Twinkles, UC First Love, Universe Supreme, Ursula, Ultra Blue, Valencia, Velvet Beauty, Velvet Dawn, Venetian Lace, Vulcan, Cabaret, Voyager, Wedgewood, Whirlaway, White Bloomin Fool, White Caper, White Christmas, White Goddess, White Leawalla White Madonna, Wild Charm, Wild Grapes, William Bruce, Winston Churchill, Wintery Rose, Witchcraft, Targeteer, Wounded Knee, Wrangler, Yerba Bunea, Woodstock, Purple Athena, Prevue, Pink Satin, Pilgrim Fire, Seventh Heaven, Magunginus, Violet Trail, Pixie Trail, Sweetheart Trail, Mountain Mist, Dora Baker, Irish Elf, Ben Hur, Tiny Ellie, Coco, Sue Ann, Pique Pixie, Hightstepper, Old Black Joe, Teacup Tempest, Mini Mum, Mingo, Pixie Blue, Pixie Pink, Dipsy Blue, Doodle Pink, Cameo Blue, Dbl. Velvet Girl, Blue Girl, Leslie, Princess Sunshine, Pink and Blue, Jumbo, Ultra Blue, Red Honey, Vallin Series, Big Beauty, Blue Freckles, Blue Honey, Blue Rose, Blue Queen, Blue Rosey, Jealousy, Lavender Honey, Papoose, Pink Fire, Pinto, Purple Honey, Red Crown, Cotton Clouds, Red Witch, Rose Prom, Silver Honey, Summer Dream, Sweet Dreams, Top Angel, Valin Red, Vallin Pink, Val's Velvet, Violet Bouquet, Whisper, Winsome Pink, Freckles.

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